THE OPTIMIST.

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BY

HENRY T. TUCKERMAN.

"That I may show the whole world that we ought to value little joys more than great ones; the night-gown more than the dress-coat; that Plutus' heaps are worth less than his handfuls, and not great, but little good-haps, can make us happy. You perceive my drift is, that man may become a little tailor-bird which, not amid the crashing boughs of the storm-tossed, roaring, immeasurable tree of life, but upon one of its leaves, sews itself a nest together, and there lies snug."—*Jean Paul Frederic Richter.*

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PREFACE.

One of the benign and useful offices of literature is to point out and uphold the poetry of Life and the common resources of Nature, to which habit is so apt to make us indifferent. It is a high distinction of English writers that they have, in so many instances, contributed standard works to this unpretending yet genial department of letters. Addison, Goldsmith, Steele, Hazlitt, Lamb, Hunt, and many others, at once suggest themselves as having illustrated the scope and gracefulness attainable through wise and kindly comments on Society, and an appreciative interpretation of the true and beautiful in Experience. The blended acuteness and enthusiasm of such urbane philosophers, brings them nearer the heart and comprehension of readers than more recondite and speculative inquirers. They make apparent the compensatory elements of human existence; they indicate the best means of refining our senses and keeping alive our better instincts; they disperse from familiar charms the mists of custom, and subdue the unhealthy devotion

to what is artificial and melodramatic, by refreshing the mind with the unperverted affinities of nature; they afford a rational solace to the afflicted, and weave consoling associations into the narrow web of destiny. Without expounding Utopian social theories, or insisting upon a limited creed, they quietly suggest available food for reflection, and appropriate objects for sympathy; and accordingly minister to enlargement of thought, elevation of taste, and delicacy of feeling.

Dr. Webster, besides the usual definition of optimism (the belief that everything in nature is ordered for the best), gives to the word another signification, viz. "that order of things in the universe that is adapted to produce the most good." In both senses the applicability of the term Optimists to the class of writers alluded to, is obvious. They describe the genuine sources both of pleasure and improvement, and eloquently indicate that minor philosophy which cultivates the original and spontaneous resources of human life; which gratefully recognises natural laws, and seeks to observe them; and which practically maintains that Truth is the most satisfactory nutriment for the mind, Beauty for the imagination, and Love for the heart. They hold, as it were, the prism of sympathetic intelligence up to the common light of day, and cause its warm and brilliant, though latent hues, to reappear. They analyse daily life to discover truth, and celebrate the reign of beauty in order to kindle the spirit of love; and this is precisely the course of the genuine Optimist.

Comparatively humble as this species of literature may be in the estimation of highly practical or absolutely scientific authors, the intended service is noble, and, if worthily fulfilled, inspires affectionate and enduring regard, as is proved by the household fame such writers enjoy.

To follow, however deviously, the path of such genial explorers, may seem a bold, yet is certainly a justifiable experiment. I have endeavored to discuss some of the amenities of Life and phases of Society in this little volume, in the same spirit of humanity which has endeared this kind of writing to all lovers of English literature; but in the opinions expressed, and the sentiments advocated, I am conscious of no impulse but that of honest conviction. In illustrating several of the topics I have cited poetical authority, not only because of its intrinsic charm, but to indicate how often what is flippantly termed the poetic view, coincides with natural fact and true philosophy. In this way, also, much indirect criticism is suggested, especially in regard to Shakspeare, whose relations to life and the universe are so intimate, that there is scarcely a theme connected with either, upon which judicious quotations from his plays will not throw a new and striking light.

Encouraged by the approbation bestowed upon several of these papers, on the part of those in whose candid opinion there is reason to trust, I frankly commit them, in their present form, to the public, hopeful

only that they will receive as charitable judgment as that awarded to previous attempts of a somewhat different character.

New York, *March*, 1850.

NEW ENGLAND PHILOSOPHY.

A COLLOQUIAL LECTURE.

"There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

HAMLET.

In all communities there is a pervading theory of life, a set of principles which guide the mass, a few permanent ideas that actuate society. The English, for example, driven by a humid atmosphere to look within doors for cheerful associations, gather about them, with profusion, the means of physical well-being. Continental visitors to Great Britain are astonished at the perfection of domestic machinery, and the ingenious devices to secure ease and warmth, and render the dwelling a castle and a home. They at once recognise in such arrangements the idea of Comfort as the chief element in the philosophy of life. People on the other side of the channel, instead of concentrating their means of enjoyment, go abroad in search of them. The Parisian finds the glare of a public *café* more agreeable than the snug fire-side of a private room; he reads his gazette under the trees in a public garden, and finds no difficulty in making a companion of his neighbor at the theatre, piquing himself all the while more on being one of the French nation than for any individual qualities or possessions. By temperament and habit he directly seeks Pastime, as the end of his existence. If we pass to Italy, we discover a passion for music, great local pride in the fame of genius, universal taste and

enthusiasm for imaginative excitement of all kinds, and realize how largely Art enters into their system of life. The Chinese trustfully refer you to "Old Custom," and the Turks to Fate, as the principles by which they regulate their being. It may be a fanciful notion, but I think the ordinary salutations of a people indicate, in a measure, their philosophy of living. The French greeting is literally—"how do you carry yourself?"—a query suggestive of egotism; that of the Italians—"how do you stand?"—which breathes of an existence in the immediate—so characteristic of the South; while our favorite phrase is—"how do you get along?"—at once calling up an external and distant goal—success.

New England opinions and enterprises are so interwoven with the social agencies of the whole country, and so constantly eulogized on public occasions, that they may be justly deemed the active and prominent element of American life. It has become so much a practice, when any reference is made to the habits, manners, and principles of our nation, to indulge in self-congratulation, that not a few shrink from the hazardous experiment of dwelling, otherwise than complacently, upon the social traits of the people. Indeed, one's patriotism is liable to be called in question if he acknowledge any other creed than implicit belief in the superiority of existent motives of action and modes of life. Such a feeling cannot obtain, however, among the candid and inquiring, or among those whose love of country is intelligent and sincere. To such the chief value of political liberty is the scope it affords for social improvement. They revert to a brave ancestry, not alone to glory in their laurels, but to emulate their fidelity, and add to the trophies of national renown. No man flatters the woman he truly loves, and that is a questionable devotion to country or friends which

is evidenced rather by blind partiality than affectionate insight, and bold recognition of truth. If any people are bound by honor and wisdom to self-criticism, it is ourselves, for we have it in our power more than any other to carry out new principles of action, to improve upon the results of experience, and immediately appropriate, as individuals, all the light that comes to us. What, then, are the ultra tendencies in our social system, taking New England philosophy, so generally quoted with admiration, as the basis of inquiry? What elements must we individually furnish, to render our culture generous? Wherein are we liable to be perverted by the theory of life which prevails?

Republics have ever been accounted peculiarly favorable to the development of character. The absence of external domination has been deemed the best guarantee for personal independence. The general confidence in this idea seems to me to have produced results of a directly contrary kind. Nowhere is the force of public opinion stronger than here. The very faith we place in our own institutions is calculated to blind us as individuals. Noble-minded men in the old world turn upon their own resources, cultivate their peculiar tastes, and rely upon their personal convictions, with the more determination, from the very despotism which surrounds them. Our countrymen pass through Southern Europe, and casually survey the apathy which broods over human existence, the abject misery of the lower orders, and the frivolous dissipation of the higher, and turn away from the spectacle in disgust. But if they could enter the apartments of some of the true spirits scattered through those densely populated cities, they would frequently pause in admiration of the scene. They would find minds living, as it were, in the very atmosphere of heroism, holding

constant communion with the good and great of past ages, and cherishing in solitude purposes worthy of the most eminent of our race. We have known young men in Italy subsisting upon the scantiest incomes rather than live upon the wages of despotism, withdrawing from the gayest society rather than countenance the levity of a court, feeding their aspirations at the fountain of hallowed literature and elevating companionship, and thus atoning for their untoward lot by a quiet bravery, more impressive than the most gallant achievements. Such characters have given us a more vivid sense of human worth than the lives of successful heroes. We have thus been made to realize how much of sacredness there is in the individual, how much he can accomplish within himself, what courage and power he may display, and what energies he may unfold by manly and philosophic endurance. With us the case is so widely different, that the tendency is to spread outward from ourselves and become identified with the mass. There is a cant of reverence applied to man in the abstract, but as an individual he is seldom appreciated, except under a professional aspect. The true end of freedom is to develope manhood and womanhood, not to make authors, mechanics, or statesmen. First, let us have the *human* attributes in their completeness,—the broad intelligence that no vocation can bound, the heart which no sect or party can absorb. Let the personal character —the living aggregate of qualities which each represents, not mere aptitudes or condition—win our interest and enlist our sympathies. It is owing to an estimate the opposite of this, that, except in the West and South, the surface of life is so level that there is little material in the way of original character in our young land,—so few, compared to the monotonously energetic mass, who stand in bold relief, distinct, consistent,

individual men, living for a great idea, like Columbus, or enduring with brave self-reliance, like Dante. The danger is ever with us that we refer our actions, thoughts, and feelings, to the idolized standard of public opinion. We believe too much in associations, and too little in ourselves. We are not inclined to concentrate mind, sentiment, and activity, but to dissipate them in generalities. Now, the actual good which the individual derives from associations is very limited. They are doubtless useful in a certain way and to a certain extent; but they ought not to blind us to nearer obligations, nor to the truth that even the cause of philanthropy may often be best promoted by personal fidelity. "Over the time, thou hast no power; to redeem a world sunk in dishonesty has not been given thee; solely over one man therein thou hast a quite absolute, uncontrollable power; him redeem, him make honest; it will be something, it will be much, and thy life and labor not in vain."

Next to the danger of subserviency to society, the unhealthy prominence of the idea of thrift is the most baneful feature in our philosophy of life. That it should be prominent in a young and commercial republic is to be expected. The great error is that there is little desire to restrain its expression within due bounds. Let it have free scope on the exchange and in the mart, but let it not continually deform our fire-side discourse, and usurp the inner sanctuary of the soul. There, at least, let not all be "base respects of thrift and none of love." Pecuniary ability is the established criterion of the value of life; circumstances are almost deified; success is exclusively desired, or rather grossly misunderstood; for if there be a single established principle of human well-being, it is that which defines the successful man as him who is true to himself—to his powers, tastes, and actual needs. It is time we not only coldly

acknowledged, but instinctively felt, that it is as barbaric to reverence wealth as to overload the limbs with ornament. The philosophy of life with us seems based on the faith that man lives by bread alone. Trade and politics completely overshadow literature and art. Invention exhausts itself upon machines and finance; our trophies may be found chiefly at the patent office. Yet the real end of all these is to procure time, and what is time, if unprovided with the resources which shall dignify and adorn it? "Poetry," says a beautiful writer, "and the principle of self, of which money is the visible incarnation, are the God and Mammon of the world."

What intelligent mind can doubt the truth of this observation? Yet how opposed to such an idea is the spirit of our community! A New England merchant, upon leaving a picture-gallery abroad, was observed by his companion to be very thoughtful. Presently he exclaimed, "I have been thinking of nothing but making money all my life. How much there is to learn and to enjoy in this world! Henceforth no thought of business shall enter my mind, until I recross the Atlantic. I will study painting, and sculpture, and music: I will commune with nature; I will ponder the works of departed genius; I will cultivate the society of the intellectual and the gifted;"—at this point of his harangue, he suddenly left his friend's side, and darted into a shop they were passing,—apologizing, upon resuming the walk, by saying he had merely stopped to inquire the price of tallow! Leisure with us is still an anomaly. Now far be it from us to gainsay the advantages of industry, to deny that labor is man's appropriate sphere, or to lament, for a moment, the spectacle of universal activity, and consequently, of prosperity around us. Let us only contend that all labor is not obvious and tangible; that no man who thinks, deserves to

be called an idler; that the absence of any obvious employment or specific profession does not necessarily make any one amenable to the charge of inactivity. How much of our boasted industry is profitless; to how many social ambition or extravagant tastes, instead of necessity, form the true motives of business; how much of the so called occupation about us is void of any higher result than that of keeping its votaries out of mischief; how seldom do those who have acquired a competency retire upon it to scenes of domestic improvement; and with what reluctance do the fortunate yield the arena to the young and penniless, even when age and infirmity warn them to retreat! It is time we learned, not to underrate business, but to appreciate leisure. A man who is miserable when his hands are unemployed or his mind unabsorbed in affairs, confesses to an evil which mere physical activity cannot remove. Where, then, are the results of our boasted education? Of what avail are prosperity and freedom? Doubtless activity is the true destiny of man, an essential condition of his being; and much of it must be outward and absorbing. But this is no reason for the horror of leisure which is so common; it is no reason why a man who is not ostensibly busy should be regarded as some strange animal, or that the mere idea of repose should prove alarming. One of our artists designed a family group, and submitted it to his wealthy patron for approval. "Sir," exclaimed that personage, highly indignant; "do you think I would have my wife painted with a rose in her hand? Let her be employed about something." Thus was spurned, even in fancy, a little dalliance with the passing moment, over one of those flowers which a benignant Creator seems to have furnished, as it were, to lure us sometimes to linger and to muse upon the highway of life. "Never less idle than when idle," was the

motto which the admirable Vittoria Colonna wrought upon her husband's dressing-gown. And may we not justly regard our appreciation of leisure as a test of improved character and growing resources?

The next feature in the prevalent theory of life to which I would allude, is the want of serenity. In society, business, and education, there is a spirit of urgency, an artificial force constantly exhibited, as opposed to true habits of mind as it is to real happiness. If enterprise hath her Carnival here, enjoyment often keeps Lent. We accustom ourselves to live in a continual bustle, and make, on all occasions, a parade of action, as if this were the true criterion of success, the only evidence of progress. We do not believe in the wise saying, that "it is an absolute, and, as it were, a divine perfection for a man to know how loyally to enjoy his being." There is a true epicurism—the luxury of an existence regulated by the natural wants and higher instincts of the individual, of which we are practically ignorant. Instead of meeting in the frank simplicity and heartiness becoming republicans, at one another's firesides, in the full and frequent confidence of genuine social feeling, interchanging opinions, and enjoying the delights of sympathy, we deem it better to crowd our small apartments to suffocation, wander, for several hours, over a dwelling which has been disarranged from garret to cellar for the occasion, exchange a word or sign of recognition with some hundred acquaintances, and close the evening's pastime by partaking of an extravagant entertainment. Even the preparation for the conflict of life to which the earlier years of existence are sacred, is marked by the same ostentatious urgency. The tender brain of infancy is fevered by the spirit of emulation. The child is incited at home by the ambitious views of his parents, and surrounded at school by a system of

artificial machinery. Certificates of conduct and studies flutter weekly before his eyes, inspiring the same anxious foreboding that the thought of promissory notes is destined, in after life, to awaken—when the banks suspend specie payments. Then come periodical examinations and exhibitions, for which the pupil undergoes weeks of extra drilling, as if he could not be too early and too deeply impressed with the importance of display. How often is the sensitive New England youth forced to sympathize in Tony Lumpkin's undutiful remonstrance to his mother's officious and mistaken kindness, which she justifies by the common plea, that it was all for the victim's good! "I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; and don't keep dinging it, dinging it into me so." And when he leaves the scene of education, whatever his calling, the same principle of "affected dispatch," as Lord Bacon calls it, must be acted upon. If he would succeed in business he must identify himself with some popular movement, he must contrive to keep his name before the public, with the epithets, "liberal and enterprising," appended to it. A hint must now and then be given, in the papers, of his yearly sales, or the amount of hands he employs. Above all, he must keep up in his own person an appearance of business. His rapid gait, hasty speech, and short salutations, must give the world assurance of a busy man. Mrs. Jameson, whose observation was artistic as well as sympathizing, observed, that American faces had an outward look. This extends even to American enjoyments, of which it may be said, as some traveller said of the English, "they amuse themselves sadly after the manner of their country." If, on the other hand, a professional life is adopted, the first thing necessary to success is, to do or to seem to do something extraordinary. One must advocate some pecu-

liar system, announce some startling novelty, or espouse some public cause, and let it be known from Maine to Georgia that he is ready to become a martyr in its behalf. In a word, this trait of our philosophy of life is almost universal. Scarcely a week passes without a celebration by public dinners and eloquent harangues of some popular event or local anniversary. The political atmosphere is never quiet, and the social spirit is ever and anon aroused by some bold doctrine or alleged discovery. Now, that there is much that is really desirable in such symptoms, it would be absurd to deny,—that they constitute an unavoidable feature in our present stage of progress, is very evident. Still it is of great importance that the individual should not be deceived or carried away by this universal semblance of activity. In older countries we often see a graceful repose upon destiny, an absence of care respecting the future, and an instinctive trust like that in which a bird or flower lives, which, to say the least, leaves the mind free to please and be pleased, and renders far less prevailing than with us the idea of self-interest and morbid ambition. Such beings have the requisite sympathy to regard the individuality, and realize the fraternal relation, which make human society endearing. Let us not be beguiled of our self-possession by the bustle around us. Let us not be so absorbed in the show of things, as to miss their essence and reality. There is no little danger amid all this exhibition of force, this large promise of results, that we shall be drawn aside from our true position by the stream of multitude. The great duty which such artificial activity imposes upon the individual, is to estimate calmly the real value of the objects for which so much sympathy is demanded. His obligations to his own nature are paramount to those which society so constantly urges. A few years since, a volcanic island

appeared off the coast of Sicily. It was announced by many and portentous signs. Shocks of an earthquake were felt in the vicinity; immense quantities of fish rose dead to the surface of the sea, and the water, for a considerable space, was strangely agitated. At length columns of dense smoke rose up from the waves, intermingled with globes of fire, and accompanied with the noise of thunder. After many days the vapor rolled away and left a small island revealed, where before there was but a watery waste. The phenomenon excited immense interest. Scientific men flocked to the place to investigate the material, and account for the construction of the island. The curious repaired thither to gratify their thirst for novelty, and the incredulous to satisfy their doubts. Finally, an English voyager landed on the spot, and planting the flag of his country, gave it the name he himself bore. Satisfied that by this act his immortality was secured, he hastened home to report his discovery. Meantime the captain of a Sicilian vessel explored the island, indignantly tore down the British ensign, and erecting that of the Two Sicilies, declared that it should be ever known as the isle of Ferdinand. While the right of possession was warmly disputing, and the philosophers of Sicily argued as earnestly all the scientific problems involved in the subject, while surveyors vied with each other in drafting its form and ascertaining its dimensions, the devoted island suddenly disappeared beneath the sea, and the next morning nothing met the eyes of the discomfited spectators but a solitary expanse of water. Are not many popular objects announced by a like display of noise and glare as foretold the volcanic island? And after absorbing the energies of a crowd of aspirants for fame or fortune, do they not, in like manner, sink into the waters of oblivion? Are not the fire of genius, the apprehension of intel-

lect, the warmth of the heart, too sacred to be carelessly expended? Shall we be decoyed by every transient fire that gleams upon the ocean of life, when we can wander calmly along its firm shores, and look out, unsubdued, upon the tumult of its waves?

There is an efficacy in calmness of which we are unaware. The element of serenity is one which we peculiarly need. I speak not of that calmness which is more properly stagnation,—not the calmness of apathy and indifference, but what Wordsworth calls the "quiet of a thinking mind self-occupied,"—the calmness of an army before the onset, of the dark cloud before the thunder-burst, of the torrent before it strikes the rocks—significant of gathering strength, of concentrate power, of quiet energy. How full of emblems of this serene action is Nature! The frosts of autumn touch the forest leaves, and we wonder at their gorgeous dyes. Gradually they are loosened from the branches by the wailing breeze, and in a few days lie thickly strewn upon the ground, there to decompose and enrich the very loam that nourished them into life. What a universal change, and how quietly produced! What can be more awful than many of the phenomena which the snows of winter occasion? Melting in the hollows of the hills, this white and fleecy substance dissolves, streams into the valleys, and collects into torrents that swell the neighboring rivers and produce the most destructive inundations. Masses of snow conjoin among the Alpine summits, and thunder down in the form of the terrific avalanche. On a night when the winds are hushed, how noiseless falls the snow! With what profound quiet it accumulates! Yet the mighty and hitherto invincible army of Napoleon was subdued by a Russian snow-storm. Thus is it with the soul. But a small part of its deepest and truest activity can be dis-

played. There is a mystery in its growth. The best energies of our nature, too, are quietly unfolded and slowly matured. There is a power and truth which can only be realized in tranquillity. There is a wisdom that displays itself only in the serene and thoughtful breast. There are beauties of character which, like the night-blooming Cereus, are closed against the glare and turbulence of everyday life, and bloom only in shade and solitude and beneath the quiet stars.

Another principle in the New England philosophy of life, which demands attention, is extreme devotion to reason. Franklin is still the personation of the American mind abroad, an honored name, indeed, but one that serves only as a partial exponent of humanity—the type of the practical, not the ideal man, of useful science rather than the soul. In no other country could Poor Richard's sayings have attained such favor. Our only metaphysician who enjoys a European reputation, is Edwards, whose celebrated work on the Will is devoted to a defence of the old popular theology. The pride of the cultivated New Englander is that he is rational. The first lore instilled into his mind is in the shape of prudential maxims. The favorite term of approbation he bestows upon a woman is *sensible*, and there is nothing so congenial to his ambition as the reputation of talent. The natural consequence is that his ideal of character is based almost wholly upon intellectual gifts and attainments. Every subject is viewed through the cold medium of expediency; all questions must be tried by the level light of the understanding, and the most hallowed associations and universal precedents wrested into the service of temporary and narrow objects. One of our most distinguished men in a critique upon Othello—that unrivalled exposition of the power of love and "jealousy, that doats but dooms, and murders yet

adores,"—declares the moral of the sublime drama to be an exposition of the evil consequences of amalgamation and runaway matches! In this tendency to seize upon the *rationale* of existence, to act upon what are called common-sense principles, there is doubtless much to approve. A community thus characterized possesses an essential element of advancement. But when such a theory is exclusive, when it is reposed upon as broad and deep enough for the soul, and becomes, as it were, the standard of life and the mould of character, we are tempted to exclaim with Charles Lamb, "Hang them!—I mean the cursed reasoning crew—those blights and blasts of all that is *human* in man or child." We do not appreciate feeling. We estimate knowledge far beyond sentiment. We reverence intellect but look distrustfully upon enthusiasm, for the love of excitement in which the formal lives of New Englanders re-act, is not entitled to the name. We crusade for the most part against vices of appetite, which are often the overflowings of rich natures, linked with the most generous qualities, and in most cases only fatal when habitual and excessive. We do not realize that the moral evils that most effectually despoil the spirit of beauty are those of *calculation*, to which perverted intellect panders;—these are integral, not incidental. A lapse of integrity, an act of successful fraud accomplished with consummate skill, is infinitely more detestable than the temporary abuse of any natural appetite, for it argues the deliberate perversion of the higher faculties—a hopeless barrenness of noble feeling. I know that many will not consent to such a broad distinction between the mind and the heart; ideas, say they, are but feelings shaped into thought. But such metaphysical niceties have nothing to do with our present purpose. Every one is conscious of a power within him which reasons, judges,

and infers, and other and far different capacities, whose office it is to awaken, impel, and fill him with emotions. Now I think it cannot be denied that the reasoning powers are too frequently cultivated with us, at the expense of those fine sensibilities and warm impulses which exist in every human breast. The sternness of our Puritan origin, the formality of our system of education, the reserve of our social intercourse, the calculating habits of our national character—all tend to repress in the young the earnest flow of their hearts; they early acquire a false shame at the expression of feeling, and come to regard the least manifestation of natural ardor as undignified and weak. And thus the saying of one of the commentators on our country is verified—our climate has no spring and our people no youth. One often recalls the exclamation of the afflicted parent depicted by Shakspeare, to his officious consoler, "I prithee, peace!—I will be flesh and blood." The brave Marquis of Posa in Schiller's Don Carlos, in his bold and generous appeal to the cruel Philip, exclaims, "In your great system, suffer *souls* to ripen!" One is inclined to urge the same plea upon those who are so active in their cares for the New England *mind*. The cares of life and the scenes of competition, into which the New Englander is early introduced, will do enough to indurate and pervert the fountains of the heart. Let not our theory of life, our practical philosophy, second the process which circumstances already sufficiently insure. The vividness and strength of early impressions every one has realized. They color our whole after lot. Now, it is remarkable that, acknowledged as this truth universally is, its actual influence upon education is so slight. The impression which the child receives will be indissolubly associated with all his future experience. Should it not then be more a matter of conscience with parents and teachers to

minister to the happiness of childhood, to reverence its freedom, instead of following the example of the sagacious man who clipped the wings of his bees and selected for them such flowers as *he* chose? Let us refrain from stamping any stern or dark impression upon the young heart, that it may meet the problem of life in a fresh and original spirit. The discipline to which we are subject in early life, however kindly intended, too often weaves shadows for our future lot, and sadly mars our spiritual destiny. Byron breaks off in the midst of his glorious lay inspired by classic scenes, to lament the forced teaching of his youth, which embittered the pages of Horace for ever to his taste; and how many New Englanders, from a similar cause, have the painful associations of a task connected with the best of books, and the gloomiest sense of restraint associated with the holiest of days! We laugh at the impatient child who daily digs up the seed to see if it has sprouted, and are content to supply good soil to the plant and leave it to the free air, the soft dew, and the balmy sunshine; why are we less just to the soul? To guard it from evil, and to meet its wants as far as we can, is indeed our duty; but a higher power has already ordained its capacities; to them we can neither add nor take away. Let us show some veneration for God's holy work, and leave it more to his smile and its own freedom.

Another consequence of this exclusive faith in reason is that it disposes us to repose entirely upon rules, to act too constantly upon arbitrary principles, till the mechanical triumphs over the spiritual, and mere habit usurps the place of the spontaneous. Now I do not deny that rules have their utility, that in a world of vicissitude certain laws of action must be, to some extent at least, adopted, and that fixed principles are the best security to virtue. But this admission does not justify the dogged attach-

ment to certain maxims which is so often boasted of as the distinction of New England philosophy. Constant reference to precise rules indicates the novice. The artist, at first, is continually measuring, but as his eye becomes practised, he confides in its accuracy. An instinct developes within him more certain than the dictum of science. And thus the soul outgrows maxims and becomes spontaneously progressive and true. With many votaries of the rational system, I believe, the great idea of improvement consists in nothing more than adding to their stock of ideas. Some, indeed, do not even go thus far, but are chiefly anxious to abide by those they have already acquired. The direct tendency of this feature of the prevalent philosophy is to lead a man, particularly one of passive temperament, to entrench himself in a set of fixed laws, as if the goal of progress was reached, the great end of life achieved. He has established a certain theory of dietetics, a certain system of expense, has chosen a set of companions, and adopted a certain political and religious creed, and now all that remains for him is to abide by all these rules, and thus realize Burns's picture :

> " O ye douce folk, that live by rule,
> Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,
> Compared wi' you—O fool ! fool ! fool !
> How much unlike !
> Your hearts are just a standing pool,
> Your lives a dyke !"

All this is directly opposed to freedom and to progress. The pursuit of truth—the highest vocation of man—is thus foreclosed ; the exercise of generous sympathies—that dearest of human privileges—is renounced. The individual has sold his birth-right. He is an apostate from the true faith of humanity.

He has relinquished the real glory of his nature. The future is denuded of hope to his fixed gaze, and his heart beats only in monotonous echoes to the slow and weary footsteps of time. A work of art is said to be perfect in proportion as it does not remind the spectator of the process by which it was created; so a character is delightful as we lose all sense of its training in the love of its spontaneous excellences.

Let us recognise the beauty and power of true enthusiasm; and whatever we may do to enlighten ourselves and others, guard against checking or chilling a single earnest sentiment. For what is the human mind, however enriched with acquisitions or strengthened by exercise, unaccompanied by an ardent and sensitive heart? Its light may illumine, but it cannot inspire. It may shed a cold and moonlight radiance upon the path of life, but it warms no flower into bloom; it sets free no ice-bound fountains. Dr. Johnson used to say, that an obstinate rationality prevented him from being a Papist. Does not the same cause prevent many of us from unburdening our hearts and breathing our devotions at the shrines of nature? There are influences which environ humanity too subtle for the dissecting knife of reason. In our better moments we are clearly conscious of their presence, and if there is any barrier to their blessed agency, it is a formalized intellect. Enthusiasm, too, is the very life of gifted spirits. Ponder the lives of the glorious in art or literature through all ages. What are they but records of toils and sacrifices supported by the earnest hearts of their votaries? Dante composed his immortal poem amid exile and suffering, prompted by the noble ambition of vindicating himself to posterity; and the sweetest angel of his paradise is the object of his early love. The best countenances the old painters have bequeathed to us are those of cherished

objects intimately associated with their fame. The face of Raphael's mother blends with the angelic beauty of all his Madonnas. Titian's daughter and the wife of Corregio again and again meet in their works. Well does Foscolo call the fine arts *the children of Love.* The deep interest with which the Italians hail gifted men, inspires them to the mightiest efforts. National enthusiasm is the great nursery of genius. When Cellini's statue of Perseus was first exhibited on the Piazza at Florence, it was surrounded for days by an admiring throng, and hundreds of tributary sonnets were placed upon its pedestal. Petrarch was crowned with laurel at Rome for his poetical labors, and crowds of the unlettered may still be seen on the Mole at Naples, listening to a reader of Tasso. Reason is not the only interpreter of life. The fountain of action is in the feelings. Religion itself is but a state of the affections. I once met a beautiful peasant woman in the valley of the Arno, and asked the number of her children. "I have three here and two in paradise," she calmly replied, with a tone and manner of touching and grave simplicity. Her faith was of the heart. Constituted as human nature is, it is in the highest degree natural that rare powers should be excited by voluntary and spontaneous appreciation. Who would not feel urged to high achievement, if he knew that every beauty his canvas displayed, or every perfect note he breathed, or every true inspiration of his lyre, would find an instant response in a thousand breasts? Lord Brougham calls the word "impossible" the mother-tongue of little souls. What, I ask, can counteract self-distrust, and sustain the higher efforts of our nature but enthusiasm? More of this element would call forth the genius, and gladden the life of New England. While the mere intellectual man speculates, and the mere man of acquisition cites authority, the man

of feeling acts, realizes, puts forth his complete energies. His earnest and strong heart will not let his mind rest; he is urged by an inward impulse to embody his thought; he must have sympathy, he must have results. And nature yields to the magician, acknowledging him as her child. The noble statue comes forth from the marble, the speaking figure stands out from the canvas, the electric chain is struck in the bosoms of his fellows. They receive his ideas, respond to his appeal, and reciprocate his love.

Constant supplies of knowledge to the intellect and the exclusive culture of reason may, indeed, make a pedant and logician; but the probability is, these benefits, if such they are, will be gained at the expense of the soul. Sentiment, in its broadest acceptation, is as essential to the true enjoyment and grace of life as mind. Technical information, and that quickness of apprehension which New Englanders call smartness, are not so valuable to a human being as sensibility to the beautiful, and a spontaneous appreciation of the divine influences which fill the realms of vision and of sound, and the world of action and feeling. The tastes, affections, and sentiments are more absolutely the man than his talent or acquirements. And yet it is by and through the latter that we are apt to estimate character, of which they are at best but fragmentary evidences. It is remarkable that in the New Testament allusions to the intellect are so rare, while the "heart" and the "spirit we are of" are ever appealed to. Sympathy is the "golden key" which unlocks the treasures of wisdom; and this depends upon vividness and warmth of feeling. It is therefore that Tranio advises —"In brief, sir, study what you most affect." A code of etiquette may refine the manners, but the "heart of courtesy," which, through the world, stamps the natural gentleman, can never be attained but through instinct; and in the same manner,

those enriching and noble sentiments which are the most beautiful and endearing of human qualities, no process of mental training will create. To what end is society, popular education, churches, and all the machinery of culture, if no living truth is elicited which fertilizes as well as enlightens? Shakspeare undoubtedly owed his marvellous insight into the human soul to his profound sympathy with man. He might have conned whole libraries on the philosophy of the passions; he might have coldly observed facts for years, and never have conceived of jealousy like Othello's, the remorse of Macbeth, or love like that of Juliet. When the native sentiments are once interested, new facts spring to light. It was under the excitement of wonder and love, that Byron, tossed on the Lake of Geneva, thought that "Jura answered from her misty shroud," responsive to the thunder of the Alps. With no eye of mere curiosity did Bryant follow the lonely flight of the water-fowl. Veneration prompted the inquiry,

> "Whither 'midst falling dew,
> When glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
> Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
> Thy solitary way?"

Sometimes, in musing upon genius in its simpler manifestations, it seems as if the great art of human culture consisted chiefly in preserving the glow and freshness of the heart. It is certain that in proportion as its merely mental strength and attainment takes the place of natural sentiment, in proportion as we acquire the habit of receiving all impressions through the reason, the teachings of Nature grow indistinct and cold, however it may be with those of books. That this is the tendency of the New England philosophy of life and education, I think

can scarcely be disputed. I have remarked that some of our most intelligent men speak of mastering a subject, of comprehending a book, of settling a question, as if these processes involved the whole idea of human cultivation. The reverse of all this is chiefly desirable. It is when we are overcome, and the pride of intellect vanquished before the truth of nature, when, instead of coming to a logical decision, we are led to bow in profound reverence before the mysteries of life, when we are led back to childhood, or up to God, by some powerful revelation of the sage or minstrel, it is then our natures grow. To this end is all art. Exquisite vocalism, beautiful statuary and painting, and all true literature, have not for their great object to employ the ingenuity of prying critics, or furnish the world with a set of new ideas, but to move the whole nature by the perfection and truthfulness of their appeal. There is a certain atmosphere exhaled from the inspired page of genius, which gives vitality to the sentiments, and through these quickens the mental powers. And this is the chief good of books. Were it otherwise, those of us who have bad memories might despair of advancement. I have heard educated New Englanders boast of the quantity of poetry they have read in a given time, as if rich fancies and elevated thoughts are to be dispatched as are beefsteaks on board our steamboats. Newspapers are estimated by their number of square feet, as if this had anything to do with the quality of their contents. Journeys of pleasure are frequently deemed delightful in proportion to their rapidity, without reference to the new scenery or society they bring into view. Social gatherings are not seldom accounted brilliant in the same degree that they are crowded. Such would not be the case, if what the phrenologists call the affective powers, were enough considered; if the whole soul, instead of the

"meddling intellect" alone, was freely developed; if we realized the truth thus expressed by a powerful writer—"within the entire circle of our intellectual constitution we value nothing but emotion; it is not the powers, but the fruit of those powers, in so much feeling of a lofty kind as they will yield."

One of the most obvious consequences of these traits appears in social intercourse. Foreigners have ridiculed certain external habits of Americans; but these were always confined to the few, and where most prevalent have yielded readily to censure. There are incongruities of manners still more objectionable, because the direct exponents of character and resulting from the philosophy of life. Delicacy and self-respect are the fruits, not so much of intellect as sensibility. We are considerate towards others in proportion as our own consciousness gives us insight. The sympathies are the best teachers of politeness; and these are ever blunted by an exclusive reliance on perception. Nothing is more common than to find educated New Englanders unconsciously invading the privacy of others, to indulge their idle curiosity, or giving a personal turn to conversation in a way that outrages all moral refinement. This is observable in society professedly intellectual. It is scarcely deemed rude to allude to one's personal appearance, health, dress, circumstances, or even most sacred feelings, although neither intimacy nor confidence lends the slightest authority to the proceeding. Such violation of what is due to others, is more frequently met with among the cultivated of this than any other country. It is comparatively rare here to encounter a natural gentleman. A New England philosopher, in a recent work,* betrays no little fear of "excess of fellowship." In the region he inhabits there is

* Emerson's Essays, 2d Series.

ground for the apprehension. No standard of manners will correct the evil. The peasantry of Southern Europe, and the most ignorant Irishwomen, often excel educated New Englanders in genuine courtesy. Their richer feelings teach them how to deal with others. Reverence and tenderness (not self-possession and intelligence) are the hallowed avenues through which alone true souls come together. The cool satisfaction with which character is analysed and defined in New England, is an evidence of the superficial test which observation alone affords. A Yankee dreams not of the world which is revealed only through sentiment. Men, and especially women, shrink from unfolding the depths of their natures to the cold and prying gaze which aims to explore them only as an intellectual diversion. It is the most presumptuous thing in the world for an unadulterated New Englander, however 'cute and studious, to pretend to *know* another human being, if nobly endowed; for he is the last person to elicit latent and cherished emotions. He may read mental capacities and detect moral tendencies, but no familiarity will unveil the inner temple; only in the vestibule will his prying step be endured.

Another effect of this exaggerated estimate of intellect is, that talent and character are often regarded as identical. This is a fatal but very prevalent error. A gift of mind, let it ever be remembered, is not a grace of soul. Training, or native skill, will enable any one to excel in the machinery of expression. The phrase—artistical, whether in reference to statuary, painting, literature, or manners, implies only aptitude and dexterity. Who is not aware, for instance, of the vast difference between a merely scientific knowledge of music and that enlistment of the sympathies in the art which makes it the eloquent medium of passion, sentiment, and truth? And in literature, how often do we find

the most delicate perception of beauty in the writer, combined with a total want of genuine refinement in the man! Art is essentially imitative; and its value, as illustrative of character, depends not upon the mental endowments, but upon the moral integrity of the artist. The idea of talent is associated more or less with the idea of success; and on this account the lucrative creed of the New Englander recognises it with indiscriminate admiration; but there is a whole armory of weapons in the human bosom, of more celestial temper. It is a nobler and a happier thing to be capable of self-devotion, loyalty, and generous sympathies, to cherish a quick sense of honor, and find absolute comfort only in being lost in another, than to have an eye for color, whereby the rainbow can be transferred to canvas, or a felicity of diction that can embalm the truest pictures in immortal numbers. Not only or chiefly in what he *does*, resides the significance of a human being. His field of action and the availability of his powers depend upon health, education, self-reliance, position, and a thousand other agencies; what he *is* results from the instincts of his soul, and for these alone he is truly to be loved. It is observable, among New Englanders, that an individual's qualities are less frequently referred to as a test of character than his performances. It is very common for them to sacrifice social and private to public character, friendship to fame, sympathy to opinion, love to ambition, and sentiment to propriety. There is an obvious disposition among them to appraise men and women at their market rather than their intrinsic value. A lucky speculation, a profitable invention, a saleable book, an effective rhetorical effort, or a sagacious political ruse—some fact which proves, at best, only adroitness and good fortune, is deemed the best escutcheon to lend dignity to life, or hang as a lasting memorial upon the tomb. Those more

intimate revelations and ministries which deal with the inmost gifts of mind, and warmest emotions of the heart, and through which alone love and truth are realized, are but seldom dreamed of in their philosophy.

There is yet another principle which seems to me but faintly recognised in the New England philosophy of life, however it may be occasionally cultivated as a department of literature; and yet it is one which we should deem essentially dear to man, a glorious endowment, a crowning grace of humanity. It is that principle through which we commune with all that is lovely and grand in the universe; which mellows the pictures of memory into pensive beauty, and irradiates the visions of hope with unearthly brightness; which elevates our social experience by the glow of fancy, and exhibits scenes of perfection to the soul that the senses can never realize. It is the poetical principle. If this precious gift could be wholly annihilated amid the common-place and the actual, we should lose the interest of life. The dull routine of daily experience, the tame reality of things, would weigh like a heavy and permanent cloud upon our hearts. But the office of this divine spirit is to throw a redeeming grace around the objects and the scenes of being. It is the breeze that lifts the weeds on the highway of time, and brings to view the violets beneath. It is the holy water which, sprinkled on the Mosaic pavement of life, makes vivid its brilliant tints. It is the mystic harp upon whose strings the confused murmur of toil, gladness, and grief, loses itself in music. But it performs a yet higher function than that of consolation. It is through the poetical principle that we form images of excellence, a notion of progress, that quickens every other faculty to rich endeavor. All great men are so chiefly through unceasing effort to realize in action, or embody in art, sentiments of deep interest or ideas

of beauty. As colors exist in rays of light, so does the ideal in the soul, and life is the mighty prism which refracts it. Shelley maintains that it is only through the imagination that we can overleap the barriers of self and become identified with the universal and the distant; and, therefore, that this principle is the true fountain of benevolent affections and virtue. I know it is sometimes said that the era of romance has passed; that with the pastoral, classic, and chivalrous periods of the world the poetic element died out. But this is manifestly a great error. The forms of society have greatly changed, and the methods of poetical development are much modified, but the principle itself is essential to humanity. No! mechanical as is the spirit of the age, and wide as is the empire of utility, as long as the stars appear nightly in the firmament, and golden clouds gather around the departing sun; as long as we can greet the innocent smile of infancy and the gentle eye of woman; as long as this earth is visited by visions of glory, and dreams of love, and hopes of heaven; while life is encircled by mystery, brightened by affection, and solemnized by death, so long will the poetical spirit be abroad, with its fervent aspirations and deep spells of enchantment. Again, it is often urged that the poetical spirit belongs appropriately to a certain epoch of life, and that its influence naturally ceases with youth. But this can only be the case through self-apostasy. The poetical element was evidently intended to mingle with the whole of human experience; not only to glow in the breast of youth, but to dignify the thought of manhood, and make venerable the aspect of age. Its purpose clearly is to relieve the sternness of necessity, to lighten the burden of toil, and throw a sacredness and hope even around suffering—as the old painters were wont to depict groups of cherubs above their martyrdoms. Nor can I believe that the

agency of this principle is so confined and temporary as many suppose. It is true our contemplation of the beautiful is of short duration, our flights into the ideal world brief and occasional. We can but bend in passing at the altar of beauty, and pluck a flower hastily by the way-side ;—but may there not be an instinct which eagerly appropriates even these transitory associations ? May they not be unconsciously absorbed into the essence of our life, and gradually refine and exalt the spirit within us ? I cannot think that such rich provision for the poetic sympathies is intended for any casual or indifferent end. Rather let us believe there is a mystic language in the flowers, and a deep meaning in the stars, that the transparency of the winter air and the long sweetness of summer twilight pass, with imperceptible power, over the soul ; rather let us cherish the thought that the absorbing emotions of love, the sweet excitement of adventure, and the impassioned solemnity of grief, with a kind of spiritual chemistry, combine and purify the inward elements into nobler action and more perfect results. Of the poetical principle, the philosophy of life, in New England, makes little account. Emblems of the past do not invite our gaze down the vistas of time. Reverence is seldom awakened by any object, custom, or association. The new, the equal, the attainable, constantly deaden our faith in infinite possibilities. Life rarely seems miraculous, and the common-place abounds. There is much to excite, and little to chasten and awe. We need to see the blessedness of a rational conservatism, as well as the inspiring call for reform. There are venerable and lovely agencies in this existence of ours which it is sacrilege to scorn. The wisdom of our renowned leaders in all departments is too restless and conscious to be desirable ; and it would be better for our boasted " march of mind," if, like the quaint British

essayist, a few more "were dragged along in the procession." An extravagant spirit of utility invades every scene of life however sequestered. We attempt not to brighten the grim features of care, or relieve the burdens of responsibility. The daughter of a distinguished law professor in Europe was in the habit of lecturing in her father's absence. To guard against the fascination of her charms, which it was feared would divert the attention of the students, a curtain was drawn before the fair teacher, from behind which she imparted her instructions. Thus do we carefully keep out of sight the poetical and veil the spirit of beauty, that we may worship undisturbed at the shrine of the practical. We ever seek the light of knowledge; but are content that no fertilizing warmth lend vitality to its beams.

When the returning pilgrim approaches the shores of the new world, the first sign of the vicinity of his native land is traced in hues of rare glory on the western sky. The sunsets grow more and more gorgeous as he draws near, and while he leans over the bulwarks of a gallant vessel (whose matchless architecture illustrates the mechanical skill of her birth-place), and watches their shifting brilliancy, it associates itself with the fresh promise and young renown of his native land; and when from the wide solitude of the Atlantic, he plunges once more amid her eager crowds, it is with the earnest, and I must think, patriotic wish, that with her prosperous activity might mingle more of the poetry of life!

But what the arrangements of society fail to provide, the individual is at liberty to seek. Nowhere are natural beauty and grandeur more lavishly displayed than on this continent. In no part of the world are there such noble rivers, beautiful lakes, and magnificent forests. The ermine robe of winter is in no land spread with more dazzling effect, nor can the woodlands

of any clime present a more varied array of autumnal tints. Nor need we resort to the glories of the universe alone. Domestic life exists with us in rare perfection; and it requires but the heroism of sincerity and the exercise of taste, to make the fireside as rich in poetical associations as the terrace and verandah of southern lands. Literature, too, opens a rich field. We can wander through Eden to the music of the blind bard's harp, or listen in the orange groves of Verona, beneath the quiet moonlight, to the sweet vows of Juliet. Let us, then, bravely obey our sympathies, and find in candid and devoted relations with others, freedom from the constraints of prejudice and form. Let us foster the enthusiasm which exclusive intellectual cultivation would extinguish. Let us detach ourselves sufficiently from the social machinery to realize that we are not integral parts of it; and thus summon into the horizon of destiny those hues of beauty, love, and truth, which are the most glorious reflections of the soul.

TRAVEL.

"Kind things, however trivial, reach the heart,
And through the heart the head, clearing away
The narrow notions that grow up at home,
And in their place grafting good-will to all."

ROGERS.

OUR times might not inaptly be designated as the age of travelling. Its records form no insignificant branch of the literature of the day. Irving's most graphic ability is displayed in his pictures of Spain and England, and all the poetry of Lamartine's mind has been lavished on his sketches of the Holy Land. Steam is annihilating space, and even the devotée of business begins to find it more expeditious to transact his foreign affairs in person than by letter. The ocean, once a formidable barrier, not to be traversed without long preparation and from urgent necessity, now seems to inspire no more consideration than a goodly lake, admirably adapted to summer excursions. Travelling is changed from an isolated pilgrimage to a kind of triumphal procession. Anciently the sage made lonely journeys in search of knowledge, the crusader roamed far to do battle, the apostle to spread truth, and the knight to seek adventures. Caravans of voyagers are now winding, as it were, on the wings of the wind, round the habitable globe. Here they glide over cultivated acres on rods of iron, and there they rise and fall on the bosom of the deep, leaving behind them a foaming wheel-track like the chariot path of a sea-god. To-day the traveller

may be discussing stocks or politics in a railroad car of New England, and in two weeks he is asleep in the corner of a French Diligence. There is one very obvious reason for the increase of travel in modern times. It is one of the few adventurous resources that remain to a prosaic epoch. It seems peculiarly desirable that a period should be set apart between youth and the time when life's serious business absorbs every active impulse, for a breathing season to the spirit. It seems right to secure in the spring-time of being, an interval during which youth shall be free to go forth and "with an eye of leisure look on all" the grandeur and beauty of the universe; mingle freely with his kind, and weave ties of affection with all the trophies that antiquity has hallowed, humanity consecrated, and art adorned. There is a strong and innate repugnance to routine in the young heart. It is a sad thought to the aspiring soul that its whole experience shall occur upon one scene and be made up of unvarying events. "He took great content," says old Burton, "exceeding delight in that his voyage, as who doth not as shall attempt the like? For peregrination charms our senses with such unspeakable and sweet variety, that some count him unhappy that never travelled, a kind of prisoner, and pity his case, that from his cradle to his old age, he beholds the same still; still, still, the same, the same!" The increasing facilities of travel are, indeed, rapidly diminishing its interest and excitement. The multitude are rushing over the hallowed ground of the earth, and many a precious flower is trampled beneath their ruthless feet. Peculiarities of costume, interesting observances, all that is picturesque and striking in national character, wear gradually away in the whirl of promiscuous intercourse. Still the novelties of art, the contrasting features of nature, and much that is absolutely indigenous in the different

races of men, are sufficiently alluring to beguile us from the monotonous experience of home. And we enjoy an especial privilege in visiting Europe. To no civilized people is the contrast greater or the points of interest more striking. From the old tower built in the reign of Francis I. at the entrance of the dock of Havre de Grace to the Pyramids of Egypt, the American traveller enjoys an uninterrupted series of fresh and powerful impressions.

The very advancement in knowledge which this age has achieved, quickens curiosity. The broad light which popular education has spread abroad, has revealed to human eyes and hearts, such glimpses of the beauty and interest of the world, that, where there is a particle of soul, there springs up an earnest desire to explore creation and commune with man. The newly-developed passion for travel is, then, to a certain extent at least, an evidence of mental activity. So, also, in no small degree, it may be traced to a benevolent spirit. There has been a union of mind effected by literature and philanthropic enterprise of late years unparalleled in human history. And the natural consequence is that our sympathies are more extended. Common objects of pursuit and congeniality of tastes now unite men of different countries, and we feel in departing for distant lands that attractions there await the affections as well as the intellect. We hail, then, this display of the travelling propensity as an auspicious sign. In this view, it is, as yet, not sufficiently estimated. The mere pursuit of pleasure or the spur of necessity enters too largely into the motives of modern travellers, to make their pilgrimage either dignified in aspect or fertile in results. A worthy object and a true spirit are essential to render travel what it should be, and when thus inspired, its records contain some of the most beautiful episodes in human

experience. The lives of eminent men furnish abundant evidence of the peculiar benefits of travel. Milton was evidently indebted to his sojourn in Italy for much of his imagery and largeness of views. The dense foliage of Vallambrosa, the beautiful view from Fiesole, the arts, the music and literary intercourse with the Italians of his age, left lasting and invaluable impressions. He mentions among the requisites for the great work he so long meditated, "a steady observation and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs;" and was contented to live with great economy to atone for his expensive "voyaging about." It has even been conjectured that Shakspeare, in early life, visited the same classic scenes. He betrays a familiarity with the characteristics of cities, the furniture of palaces, local manners, and especially with the old law of betrothment in Katherine and Petrucio, rather too intimate, it has been thought, to have been gleaned wholly from books. He speaks with the fondness of an old resident of "fair Padua, the nursery of arts," "fruitful Lombardy, the pleasant garden of all Italy," and "Pisa renowned for grave citizens." There are, at all events, strong reasons to believe that he experienced a sea-voyage. But his imagination was so vivid and universal that the records of travellers furnished him with pictures little short of reality; he became the companion of their wanderings by virtue of the rare and quick sympathy which opened to him all the treasures of nature, and made every man a brother. He had small need of travel who could conjure up at will so lovely an island and such marvellous people as compose the Tempest. Petrarch was a constant wanderer, and Dante's poem abounds with local reminiscences. Adventure and novel scenes feed the poetic soul. Cervantes gathered the materials of his works during years of foreign service. We can trace the noble public spirit

of Evelyn, to whom England is indebted for her forest trees, to the influence of his early journeyings. The love of travel was a distinguishing trait of Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Bacon, and Sir Thomas Browne. The great Alfred employed people to travel to satisfy his curiosity respecting distant countries.

Individual taste is strikingly manifested in travel. Scott cared little for the Roman remains, but was instantly attracted by every feudal tower. Dr. Johnson said, if he were to travel, convents would interest him more than palaces. Manners and scenery, arts and literature, statistics and localities, attract men of different fancies. But there is one common altar at which the sympathies of all noble travellers are kindled. They soon become converts to the opinion that "a beautiful face is the finest of spectacles." They learn more highly to appreciate that sex whose condition in every land forms the standard by which they estimate its degree of civilization. They insensibly acquire, if they never before possessed, something of that chivalric estimate of woman which breathed in the lay of the troubadour and nerved the arm of knighthood. This sentiment may, indeed, be vivified by the novel circumstances under which she is revealed to the wanderer—as a nun or an improvisatrice, amid the sweet solemnity of a cathedral, beneath the awning of a gondola, or in the balmy atmosphere of an orange-grove. His romantic dreams may be buoyed up and irradiated by unaccustomed scenes or novel manners; but they are oftener nurtured by that genial kindness which prompts the cheering salutation of the passing peasant girl, which sustains the almost maternal vigil of the hostess by the sick couch of the wanderer, and leads the refined and lovely to smile so charitably upon his colloquial blunders. It is the sweet prerogative of woman to throw around the traveller's sojourn, the endearing associations

of home ; to lift from his heart all consciousness of isolation, and brighten every link of his "lengthening chain" with golden memories.

The acquisitions of no man are largely available until in some measure realized by experiment. Knowledge acquired by the slow and artificial process of reading is not only often a mere isolated benefit, but sometimes an absolute injury to its possessor. It is happy for men of an inquiring turn that life is so ordered that they are compelled to take part in its struggles. "Continual plodders" have won little but "base authority." Pedantry is one of the most unlovable of human qualities. How often may be applied to the merely learned the sad reproach in Wallenstein :

> "Thy wisdom hath been proved a thriftless friend
> To thine ownself. See, it has made thee early
> A superannuated man and (but
> That my munificent stars should intervene)
> Would let thee in some miserable corner,
> Go out like an untended lamp."

Health, too, often perishes in chasing the "weary honors." Buoyancy departs from the spirit, and bloom from the cheek. The ambition of scholarship, when it absolutely possesses the mind, is often a gloomy barrier, dividing its votary from the tender humanities and cheerful haunts of his race. But the wisdom born of observation, the lore gathered in conversation, in contemplating the phases of society, in noting the phenomena of life, neither bows the frame nor indurates the heart. No man can garner such fruits except by social activity, which promotes cheerfulness and health, and keeps the better sympathies in constant exercise. They are gleaned in an atmosphere of

love and opinion. The process employs the whole nature, instead of tasking the mind alone. And this experimental knowledge leavens the dead lump of mere erudition. Life is imparted to what was before inert; and the most valuable of abstract ideas are enlivened by the interest of personal experience. Of this valuable wisdom travel is the prolific source. It is the cant of the day to reverence abstractions. But if there is any self-evident truth, it is that we are created to be moved within by impressions from without. There is, indeed, an "electric chain," but it must be struck. We read, for instance, of feudal times, when art, chivalry, and commerce blended their agency in impressing the face of society; and the elements of civilized life were but rudely organized. Our vague ideas of this epoch become, as it were, real and definite, after an observing sojourn in such a city as Florence; where we behold the old towers reared as a defence and a distinction, the massive architecture and grated windows that render the dwelling a fortified castle, the stone seats beside the palace gates, where the retainers sat, and the very rings to which the standards of faction or the banners of families were attached. In the salutations and domestic intercourse of the people we trace, as we never can in books, the old familiar and friendly intercourse of different classes, and recognise not a little of the ancient spirit of allegiance and "the heart of courtesy." We read, too, of the Inquisition, but how is our impression of its influence deepened by tracing its effects in the grave bearing of the Spaniards! Titian's portraits have been well called true history, and the Ducal palace at Venice embodies and illustrates the peculiarities of her ancient government. If much of the true sense and meaning of the past is undefined in our minds, by thus communing with its monuments, we attain not a little of its essence

and sentiment. Lord Byron studied the classics and read history in his youth. Were the facts and fables gathered in those early studies the same to him after his visit to Greece and Italy, as before? Did not the scenery, the climate, the touching ruins, the glorious arts that there appealed to his senses, awaken dormant memories, and brighten into a glorious reality the memorable scenes of the past? Was Cæsar the same, in the poet's imagination, after he had wandered over the palace-ruins on the Palatine? Were the combats of the amphitheatre as dream-like when he looked from the weedy corridors of the Coliseum or mused beside the statue of the dying gladiator? Was Sappho brought no nearer to his fancy by a visit to the "Isles of Greece?" Childe Harold's Pilgrimage furnishes the best reply. Many of the most striking circumstances recorded in the Chronicle of Granada, might have been written out of Spain, but could Irving have woven so picturesque and charming a narrative without those romantic reveries and quiet adventures that blest his sojourn at the Alhambra? Madame de Stael could have studied the literature of Germany without journeying thither, but how life-like and comprehensive the whole subject became when she had mingled with the literati of Weimar, and grown familiar with the scenery of the Rhine. Travel gives a character of experience to our knowledge, and brings the figures upon the tablet of memory into strong relief. To fully understand Petrarch, one should have breathed the air of an Italian spring. We may have often wondered at the vain-glorious autobiography of Cellini, but the acquaintance of one Italian, with a large organ of self-esteem, illustrates the character at once. A northern reader of Shakspeare attributes wholly to the poet's fancy the extravagant similes of Romeo and the irrepressible passion of Juliet. A single observation of

youthful love in Southern Europe will transfer the characters from the domain of imagination to that of real life; and we know that in the age of Elizabeth, a frankness and heartiness prevailed analogous to what we at present denominate southern manners. The inhabitants of cold latitudes are astonished that the peasantry about Vesuvius and Etna should contentedly build their huts on the lava and near the wrecks of former eruptions. A few summer days passed in those regions would induce a placidity of mood, a repose upon destiny, and a dalliance with the passing moment, that might explain the delusion.

Not only from the life it imparts to previous knowledge, but on account of the actual teaching it affords, the experience of travel is invaluable. I speak not so much of detached facts as regards population, manufactures, and the statistics of political economy; these may often be learned from the pages of an Encyclopædia. There is a species of information scarcely to be gathered in the study, or if so attained, but inadequately realized, and therefore without effect. It is that series of facts and impressions, those general ideas which go to form what may be called a philosophy of life. The standard by which the untravelled measure their destiny is generally local. With them, the world of books and the real world are totally unconnected. It is only by throwing ourselves, as it were, into the ocean-tide of humanity, that we can obtain a glance at the great laws of life. When we have wandered into distant lands, and seen the same mysterious destiny shared by millions of similar beings; when we have heard the prayers, joined the festivities, witnessed the loves, and shuddered at the crimes of different nations, we gain, as it were, a new conviction of the universality of the system of things under which we live. We perceive that our lot is not peculiar. We recognise, with new sensibility, a power sustain-

ing and guiding this immense community of spirits, and we fall back upon this primitive truth with an unwonted trust and a profound reverence. Those who surround a man in his own country are, as it were, but repetitions of himself. Familiarity renders him blind to the characteristics of his nature which they teach him. In strange communities, however, the traits of character are so modified as to be striking. And thus it often happens that a traveller is indebted to his absence for his most valuable self-knowledge. Abroad, too, he is thrown upon his own resources. He feels, perhaps, for the first time, that "he is a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth." And in this experience there is permanent advantage. The will acquires new force, for its exercise is necessary to maintain his position and prosecute his purposes. The perceptive powers are called into more intense action, for he is required to observe where novelty excites, and information must be rapidly acquired. The great lesson of self-dependence is learned in travel if it is learned at all; for however friendless a man's position may be in his own country, the very familiarity of things will yield him no little support. But when all accustomed props are withdrawn and the scene is changed to a far-off land, to his own mind must the traveller look for his means of success; to his own capacities of self-government and social influence, for those aids and appliances essential to rational enjoyment. What latent energy and heroic perseverance did travel call forth in such men as Mungo Park, Bruce, Ledyard, and Belzoni! If a man's past education has been neglected, his energies previously untasked, travel will surely make the misfortune felt. The lessons spread before him in an unexplored volume of nature and man, will present but a confused or blank page, if there is no reflective habit to unlock its stores, no generous sympathies to give interest to its details,

no well-considered principles to illumine its obscurity. As the unfortunate Casper Hauser was incapable of motion or speech when released from his long imprisonment, so the uninformed and weak can neither enjoy personal progress nor elevating communion, when ushered unattended upon the highway of the world.

The phrenologists tell us of an organ of locality, and there is no respect in which men differ more widely than in what may be called a sensibility to place. Upon some, local change makes little impression. They seem incapable of exhausting the interest of their native spot, or rather, are wholly indifferent to place as such. Others are so constituted as to find the greatest delight in exploring new scenes. They become inexpressibly weary of one set of objects, and will make astonishing sacrifices to obtain the refreshment of a change. Hence the pleasure which so many shiftless wanderers have derived, a delight quite inexplicable to those who are too enamored of the comfortable and familiar to move from their chimney-nooks. By virtue of this native interest in localities, the memory is astonishingly vivid. Places visited years by-gone are recalled in all their features by an effort of the will. In the weary night-watches which accompany a slow convalescence, the mind, when too prostrate to grapple with abstract ideas, easily invokes the scenes of its past experience. The very flavor of fruits or wine peculiar to a province, the odors, the sights, the sounds of a country come back upon the senses with a marvellous freshness. In this manner, the traveller with a large organ of locality and sufficient imagination, as he lies feeble and impatient amid the silence and shadows of a sick room, revisits in fancy the lands he once traversed with delight. The scenery, the faces of his old com-

panions, and the incidents of his pilgrimage, re-appear to cheat confinement of its weariness and suffering of its gloom.

Among the pleasures of the traveller is to be reckoned the consideration he enjoys. If the persons with whom he comes in contact interest him from their novel manners or opinions, he presents to them a similar attraction. He is a specimen of a different race. His personal experience, the institutions under which he has lived, the views in which he has been educated, have modified his merely human characteristics. In some point of knowledge or character he presents an aspect of superiority; and then, too, he is a stranger, one who will bear from these new scenes permanent impressions. Hence, by the kindly and intelligent he is regarded with interest, and if of a cordial disposition, cannot fail to realize the charms of hospitality, and to win esteem and love. He may thus be enabled to speak with an authority never before granted him. His claims to regard are recognised as they never were among his familiars. What is individual in him is seen and acknowledged among men as it never was at home. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," is a saying of holy origin. The traveller soon feels its truth, and it may cheer him through life to have thus had his legitimate claims cordially recognised. There is often a disposition to sneer at the pretensions, however humble, which a man makes in his native place. There his influence is seldom great. He passes not for what he his worth. Thrown among his kind, away from the influence of familiarity and prejudice, free scope is afforded him, and the true man is, perhaps for the first time, fairly revealed to his fellows. A learned friend of Boccacio was accustomed in Italy to call himself a Greek, and in Greece, an Italian, being persuaded that in both

countries it was honorable to pass for a stranger. Even Milton was first appreciated abroad. When a youth, unknown to fame, his genius was warmly acknowledged by the Italians, whereas he was not renowned in England until long after the appearance of his Paradise Lost. Who shall say that it was not among strangers that he conceived the idea of a work which the world should "not willingly let die?"

There are few more touching instances of the fragility of delight than that afforded by an ardent traveller, too ill to enjoy the charms which surround him. To gaze on the richest scenery and breathe the balmiest air, yet be prevented by pain from realizing their blessedness; to stand amid beautiful ruins, with a mind so unnerved by physical weakness as not to luxuriate in their associations; to climb the volcano, only to sink breathless on its summit; wander to where the greenest hills are canopied by the most azure skies, only to die when life is arrayed in new beauty; to pause with a throbbing brow before a miracle of art, or tread with a quivering pulse the magnificent aisle of a church—is to know by experience the sufferings of Tantalus. Yet thus daily do the grandeur of St. Peter's, the gaiety of the Palais Royal, and the loveliness of the Bay of Naples, fall, with a melancholy contrast, upon the heart of suffering. Thus mingling the glory of nature with the weakness of humanity did the Last Minstrel traverse the land of song; thus breathing his last sigh in the regions of poetry, died the gifted Keats.

The necessity of economy in travelling, as in other arrangements of life, often proves a blessing; for much comfort and independence may contravene the most desirable influences of journeying. I have often noted with compassion the equipage of a rich Englishman on the continent. Day after day he proceeds rapidly through a new and picturesque country, of which

he takes no note save by an occasional glance from the window. Occupied with a book, or half asleep on his rich cushions, he suffers himself to be whirled from place to place, holding communion only with his servant, seeking in silence a solitary apartment at the inns, and ever carrying with him the associations and customs of home. On the same road, perhaps, his poorer countryman, a pensioned artist or invalid student, is ensconced in a lumbering old coach, with half-a-dozen natives, who point out to him the interesting localities, afford him specimens of the people, and by their conversation and manners unfold continually striking features of national character. It is well to be thus forced into contact with men and things. If one so situated has a teachable disposition, he cannot but improve. At all events, the pedestrian and the traveller by public conveyance gains an insight which the luxurious egotist seldom acquires. He imbibes a foreign atmosphere, and feels himself in a new position. The desired experiment is fairly tried. To "cast ourselves into the rushing of time, into the rolling of accident," is one of the true objects of travel. We wander in order to subject ourselves to new agencies. We roam to enlarge our experience, to commune with what is foreign, and not obstinately to entrench ourselves in home peculiarities, or rather be dragged onward, while in thought and feeling we are stationary, absorbed in personal views by the thrall of habit.

Much is said of the pertness and prejudice of travellers. Upon weak minds, "voyaging about," doubtless, has as ill an effect as shallow draughts of learning. But such form the exception, not the rule. Characters of this order are as likely to be spoiled at home as abroad. They are finely satirized in "As you Like it." "Farewell, monsieur traveller," said Rosalind,

"look you lisp, and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola." There is, however, a certain narrow spirit sometimes indulged towards returned travellers, especially if they are of an enthusiastic turn, and prone to dwell upon their experiences. Such converse is at once set down by these cavillers to conceit and assurance, whereas it not infrequently springs from an honest admiration and tasteful ardor. To men of liberal feeling and enlightened curiosity, nothing is more interesting than to learn the impressions derived from travel. Far from ridiculing, they encourage the ardent reminiscences of one fresh from foreign scenes, delight in his conversation, and sympathize in his feelings, as being both natural and worthy. Next to visiting interesting places, is the pleasure of hearing a friend describe and discuss them. When a man talks ostentatiously of the illustrious acquaintances he has formed abroad, or boasts of his achievements, he is fairly exposed to ridicule. But when one speaks from a full heart of the aspects of nature, of glorious productions of art, of social traits and stirring associations; when one in kindness and honesty endeavors to make others share the impressions of a pilgrimage, whoever listens with an ill-concealed sneer, convicts himself of gross illiberality, and should become a traveller himself to acquire more generous sentiments.

There is no small discipline involved in travel. In no experience of life are the trials of patience more severe. He whose serenity is not proof against petty vexations, who cannot brook the frequent interruption of his convenience, and smile at occasional imposition, had better not quit the regulated circle of his own sphere. To be a good traveller argues one no ordinary philosopher. A sweet landscape must sometimes be allowed to

atone for an indifferent supper, and an interesting ruin charm away the remembrance of a hard bed. Entrance to a large city is not infrequently purchased at the expense of provoking delays at custom-houses and passport offices; and glimpses of a classic stream purling along in the moonlight, is often the only circumstance which alleviates the chill weariness of a night-jaunt. We must sometimes allow the bland face of a peasant saluting the passing carriage, to mitigate the annoyance of disagreeable companionship, and invoke cheerful memories to brighten a dreary prospect. In a word, a good-natured spirit, a determination not to be annoyed, and an urbanity of soul quick to recognise the agreeable and dwell upon the "silver lining of every cloud," must be the prevailing mood of the traveller. With this he may defy quarantines and passports, cheating landlords and by-way accidents. A pilgrimage is an admirable remedy for over-fastidiousness and sickly refinement. Happy for the traveller if he have something of Goldsmith's humor, and Lamb's sensibility to the amusing. Then shall the very mishaps of his wayfaring provoke a smile, and not a face or incident cross his path without yielding a moral or furnishing a picture. Besides these minor troubles travel gives occasion for more grave disquietudes. There are times when the lot of a stranger weighs heavily upon the heart, when an unwonted yearning for the familiar takes possession of the mind. Sitting in the silent chamber of his inn before seeking the solace of society or sight-seeing, the newly-arrived traveller is often conscious of a solitude more profound than that of the desert. There is sometimes a sense of loneliness inspired by the eager multitudes of strange cities, almost sublime in its desolation. The mighty tide of human life seems rushing by, and the lone pilgrim is like an "ocean-weed cast on the shore." Not an eye meets his with

familiarity, or friendliness in its glance. Not an accustomed tone salutes his ear. Not a heart beats responsive to his own. He is alone in the midst of his kind. Hirelings only betray a selfish interest in his person. He wanders amid the hum of business, he hears the converse of friendship, he sees the tokens of domestic enjoyment, but he is a *stranger;* and if death should then overtake him not a tear will there moisten his grave—not a sigh be wafted to his memory. This detached feeling—this consciousness of isolation, may, indeed, be rarely experienced, and is usually put to flight with ease; but it may be fairly accounted among the trials of travel, and when health and resources fail, is susceptible of terrible aggravation. Another and more common drawback to the traveller's enjoyment, is the necessity of breaking away from delightful scenes just as association has endeared them, and yielding up congenial society and cherished friends when habit had made them almost necessary to happiness. Where the temper is sanguine, abundance of disappointment awaits the traveller. The objects that allure him have been too long familiar to his fancy not to make the first impression painful. Anticipation has perhaps absolutely precluded the zest of enjoyment. "Distance has lent" so great an "enchantment to the view," that the illusion is not dispelled without a rending of the most valued associations. Disgust too often usurps the place of delight. And then it is well to consider how much the traveller's pleasure depends upon circumstances, which it is impossible to foresee or contravene. The face of a wo-begone beggar may poison the most exquisite meal. The market near the Pantheon may prevent the spectator from enjoying its architecture; a misty day may spoil the finest view on the Rhine; a headache prevent all laughing at the carnival; a *cicerone's* gabble annihilate the quiet eloquence

of a Madonna's smile, and a hard mule preclude rapt devotion to the scenery of the Alps.

Travel is the great teacher of liberality. A limited sphere of observation is unfavorable to the attainment of generous views. A rare combination of benevolent feeling and good sense is requisite to counteract the narrowing influences of local prejudice. For this and similar defects of character, the extended prospect which travel opens is the readiest remedy. Can a man of taste and sensibility mingle at large with the world and not insensibly acquire more liberal habits of thought? When he has sojourned for weeks amid the solemn loneliness of "old ocean's grey and melancholy waste," threaded the motley crowds of a hundred towns, and gazed upon a long procession of princes and peasants—will he not lose all sense of petty distinctions, and look upon his race with an "infinite pity, an infinite love?" Will the sacred shrines of genius and the mighty fields of history inspire no new interest in man? When he discovers that "stranger is a holy name" in every clime, will not the conviction awaken and confirm the feeling of human brotherhood? It is next to impossible to be brought into contact with a vast number of individuals, to enter into the peculiarities of foreign experience, to lavish thought and sympathy over a large sphere, without mental expansion. How many of Dr. Johnson's prejudices would have faded away, had he grown familiar with other lands and modified his partiality for Fleet street. How much of the stationary civilization of the Chinese is attributable to their obstinate habits of non-intercourse. The Venetians were among the earliest European travellers, and they were long celebrated for their respect for strangers. There is a comprehensiveness of view, a superiority to the trifling and the mean,

and an enlarged intelligence, which is one of the most valuable results of travel. The happy disposition and culture, or social circumstances of individuals, may enable them to arrive at the same end by different means; but they form exceptions to a general rule. The confined walls of a familiar sphere fall before the traveller's eyes, and he looks forth to the far horizon. He recognises the whole world of Nature as his inheritance, and hails every man as a brother. Intolerance, contempt, unfounded judgments, the whole train of mean associations that mar the fairness of his spirit, fly away as night-birds at the approach of dawn. He has learned to behold the signatures of truth, to appreciate the influence of circumstances, to overlook the boundaries of sect, and pierce the veil of condition. A thoughtful inspection of life, on a large scale, has reduced the exaggerated aspect of his selfish aims to their due proportion. Memorials of the past have taught him more calmly to estimate an existence whose duration is so transitory; and to cherish those brave and elevated sentiments which alone can redeem it to a noble nature. His vain confidence vanishes before the majestic evidences of infinite wisdom. The mystery of life comes home to his mind. The limits of knowledge grow painfully obvious to his wider vision; and he comes to look habitually around him, with an inquiring mind ever open to conviction, and a heart touched with veneration and love. Truth is nearer such a spirit; progression certainly is its destiny. Literature and society are henceforth liberally interpreted. A humane eclecticism takes the place of a partial creed. The bonds which custom and arbitrary discipline had riveted upon the young soul are riven asunder, and it goes forth with a lofty independence, a freedom of thought, a catholic spirit. The dread of mere human opinion is conquered. Reverence turns freely to

congenial objects, to the truly great in humanity, to the benignant authority of Heaven. The pilgrim, emancipated from social tyranny, yields only to the impulse of personal conviction, and follows no luminary but the star of Truth.

We are all seekers. In every human breast there are strong and various desires, more or less defined, and all forbidding repose. To action we naturally turn to allay this restlessness of spirit; and there seems, in such cases, an almost instinctive disposition to seek in change of place the refreshment we crave. Hence that beautiful adjuration of the Psalmist, "O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might *fly away* and be at rest." We know that wherever we go our consciousness remains:

> "Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
> Our own felicity we make or find."

But the perceptive faculties are so exercised in travel, novelty is so sweet an excitement, and the very sense of progress from place to place, so soothing, that we cannot wonder that so many ardent and sensitive men have been wanderers. "In travelling," says the poet Rogers, "we multiply events, and innocently." "I have discovered," says the bard of Laura, "that change of place is the only thing which can long keep us from that weariness which is inseparable from a sedentary life;" and we know how often he loved to exchange the quiet solitude of Vaucluse for the excitement of an embassy. Until he became a tragic writer, the earnest soul of Alfieri found its chief solace in travel. Byron obeyed a poetical impulse when he turned to foreign scenes as the associations of home became painful or vapid. Dante, wrapt in the mantle of stern endurance, found some relief for his poignant sense of injury in roaming from court to court. Travel furnishes genial aliment to the poetic

soul. It has been well said that "a genius for poetry is nothing but a finer liability to impressions, but what matters the liability if we do not put ourselves in the way of thoughts and feelings that are to impress us?"

Travel deepens the sense of nationality. We hear much of the foreign tastes acquired abroad, and are apt to deduct from a traveller's patriotism in the ratio of his enthusiasm for distant countries. This is a great error. Perhaps no man is fully aware of the reality of his love of country, until he knows the lot of a stranger. His local and political partialities may have warmed him, at home, into a partizan orator; but when the sea once divides him from his country, he clings to his citizenship with unwonted pride; he feels, as never before, a high and delicate sense of national honor; the fame of his country becomes a matter of individual concernment. He walks amid the throngs of a strange people, rejoicing in the badge of his nativity. I shall never forget how strongly these emotions were awakened, at the close of a long, balmy day in spring, when I approached the ancient city of Syracuse. My tired mule was slowly descending a declivity bordered with broken ranges of tombs. The long, pencilled lines of an Italian sunset—rose and saffron and amber, were glowing in the west. A few peasants were driving their goats through the grass-grown area within the gates. The silence and decay of a scene so renowned in history, were doubly affecting at that pensive hour. I looked upon the crumbling mounds of the adjacent plain, up to the grey and moss-grown walls of the impoverished town, and then over the beautiful bay so often furrowed by the keels of opposing squadrons, but now lonely and placid as one of our mountain lakes. Anchored in the midst of the calm waters, lay a beautiful yacht, and at the mast-head the "star-spangled

banner" was fluttering in the breeze. Then, as if by magic, the thought of Dionysius, of Damon and Pythias, of the glory and grandeur of Syracuse, vanished from my mind; and gave place to visions of mighty forests, broad rivers, and bustling cities; the visible tokens of decay were forgotten in thoughts of the fresh energies and triumphant activity of my native land; and the sepulchre of Archimedes, who boasted that had he whereon to stand, he could move the world, grew dim at the thought of him whose simple tomb is shadowed by the groves of Mount Vernon. Let me refer, in this connexion, to the singular advantages, in a national point of view, possessed by the American traveller. The names of older nations are associated with degrading facts in their history, or prejudices induced by real or supposed aggressions. Their course, either in arms or diplomacy, towards each other, has given rise to national prejudices which time will scarcely heal. But among the people of continental Europe, the name of American is a most honorable passport. It is a fresh and hopeful name. It is associated with the cause of freedom and human progress; and those who bear it must be singularly false to its claims, if they do not find it the occasion of frequent and flattering consideration. Our national existence has been too brief to allow the formation of those inveterate antipathies which often obstruct the path of other travellers. We have been called the head of the popular party of the world. The ploughman at Marathon, we are told, blesses the wanderer from a country which sent her tribute for the relief of struggling Greece, and reared the standard of popular education at Athens. The proudest frigate of the Turkish fleet is the offspring of American skill and enterprise. The Italian gazes with affectionate enthusiasm upon one of a nation whose struggle for liberty has been made

familiar to him by the graphic pen of Botta. France, notwithstanding our little variances, can never forget the name of Lafayette; and even dismembered Poland has a vital graft of nationality upon our country's tree, in the memories of Kosciusko and Pulaski.

The physical benefits of travel are beginning to be better appreciated. There are doubtless many instances where disease is aggravated by the exposure and irregularities incident to a tour. But in numerous cases, the change of air and diet, the exercise and pleasing excitement, renew the tone of the system when other remedies have been vainly resorted to. In travelling especially, does "good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both." In proof of this, witness the zest with which travellers record their good dinners, and the cordial tribute they ever pay to places and persons, which have thus ministered to their pleasure. The district where they first taste a rare wine, the waters beside which they have feasted upon some delicious fish, or the road-side inn where they have unexpectedly fallen upon a hearty meal, often figure in their pages to the detriment of the magnificent ruin, or the exquisite landscape. Something of Falstaff's zealous relish colors such reminiscences. In approaching Naples, the traveller anticipates a legitimate feast of maccaroni, and a bottle of lachrymachristi, as well as the sight of Vesuvius and Virgil's tomb. Upon certain unsentimental voyagers, the sausages of Bologna leave a more vivid impression than her pictures; and on the shores of Greece, classical references are often neglected in favor of a more recent authority which bids us "fill high the bowl with Samian wine."

The romance of travel is rapidly disappearing. Steam, in the train of its many blessings, brings a counterpoise of disadvan-

tages. What we gain in time we often lose in enjoyment. As the conveniences of travel multiply, we are apt to grow more selfish. The necessity of mutual forbearance and mutual support is greatly diminished, and the traveller's position is often isolated and mechanical. What have become of the delightful stage-coach adventures which used to make a day's journey so rich an experience? When the Atlantic was ploughed only by sailing vessels, fellow-passengers felt the necessity of being mutually agreeable, but few deem it worth their while so to enliven a fortnight in a steam-ship, half of which, perhaps, is passed in sea-sickness. When the Hudson was navigated by sloops only, complains an old Knickerbocker, the voyagers became quite like a family party before they reached Albany; but on board the gay and rapid steamboats that now ply on that glorious river, you see ladies wholly absorbed in the scenery, and gentlemen reading newspapers. There is no hope of speaking a homeward-bound craft, or lying to in some picturesque inlet for the night. Mandeville, the author of the first English book of travels, was thirty years exploring countries that may now be satisfactorily visited in three. The very deserts are to be intersected by railroads. Venice will soon be joined to the main land by a bridge, and an omnibus has been several years established at Athens. It must be confessed that the true zest of a tour is seldom realized in the United States. The absence of time-hallowed associations is one obvious cause. Another may be found in the fact that we travel chiefly for purposes of business or with a view to pleasure, when the jaunt is ended. The rapidity of movement, the prevailing similarity of manners through the country, the crowds which throng our public conveyances, and the utilitarian objects in view, make travelling with us oftener a toil than a pleasure; so that the

experienced traveller might ask upon his return from an American trip, in the same tone with which the exquisite, in Pelham, speaks of an ill-cut coat, "do you call this thing a journey?" In cars and steamboats we often feel like victims rather than voluntary agents, an idea which the recklessness and terrible accidents so often occurring, is not calculated to dispel. Natural scenery is the grand resource of the American traveller. In this respect, his pleasures are unsurpassed. Niagara, the lakes, the various magnificent mountains and lovely shores, are the shrines of our pilgrimages; and fit altars are they to kindle the worship of a free people, and inspire with elevated enthusiasm, the poets of liberty. We can easily fancy what a rare and romantic delight an inhabitant of the old world must experience in ranging the primeval forests, tracing the majestic rivers, or coursing the boundless prairies of this continent. The genial activity and free exposure to nature in all her bold magnificence, the delicious repast of the hunter, the woodland encampment, the mighty groves, the clear sky, and the brilliant wild flower, as if "fresh from the hand of God," must strike his senses and his soul with something of the glory of a new creation. And the volumes of De Tocqueville and Chevalier indicate how much there is in our social condition to attract the philosophic eye, and interest the philanthropic heart.

In placing so high an estimate upon the advantages of travel, we would not be understood as in the slightest degree undervaluing those sacred feelings that bind a human being to the place of his nativity, and identify all his dearest hopes and interests with home. Abundant are the consolations of the untravelled. They "hurry not to arrive where none expect them," nor "drag at each remove a lengthening chain." They are exempt from the evils of absence, and need not find "life's

warmest welcome at an inn." They may travel at will in their library chairs, unannoyed by the visitations of that passion, which the organ of locality, when once indulged in, will not let sleep. For them has been kept sacred a green spot for the affections to take root; their love does not "run to waste and water but the desert," and they can use the sublime words of a gifted spirit;—"I die without having seen Switzerland, and the ocean, and many fine sights, but the scenes of eternity I shall in no case fail to see." Happy is the being whose views are bounded only to be blessed, who is unvisited by "chance desires," who finds in the immediate and familiar all that is genial and requisite, and who can say with an amiable and quaint essayist, "I would set up my tabernacle here. My household gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not removed without blood." There is no purer and more lasting enjoyment of life than falls to their lot, who feel that

> "A man's best things are nearest him,
> Lie close about his feet;"

who feel, amid the vicissitudes of time, that they are environed by associations and objects rendered dear by unbroken sympathies; who are ever greeted by "familiar faces," rove, through life, beside the same river that witnessed the dreams of boyhood; sit, in age, beneath the same tree that sheltered their infancy; and sleep, at last, in the shadow of the same spire that guided them to heaven. To a true spirit, no scene of natural beauty is ever exhausted, and the most limited social intercourse is rich in meaning. We have only to remember what London was to Charles Lamb, and "Our Village" is to Miss Mitford, to perceive how many of the best fruits of travel may be realized without its deprivations.

To reap the best fruits of travel, a certain degree of enthusiasm, and something of an ideal temperament, is essential. Without them, the pains of a pilgrimage will be unalleviated, and the pleasures but feebly enjoyed. "Does he," asks an earnest writer, "who is not endowed with an enthusiastic imagination, flatter himself that he is, in any degree, acquainted with the earth on which he lives, or that he has travelled through any of its various countries? Does his heart beat at the echo of the mountains, or has the air of the South lulled his senses in its voluptuous softness?" It is chiefly through associations that travel interests, and their vividness evidently depends upon the ardor and imagination of the traveller. If these obtain, he will forget fatigue and inconvenience, lose himself at every hallowed spot, and keenly relish the least inkling of an adventure. To him a moonlight night at Venice, a sunrise from Mount Etna, a morning in the Florence Gallery or Westminster Abbey, a *spartito* of Rubini, an excursion on the Lake of Geneva, or a promenade in the Tuileries, will be fondly remembered long after the trials of his tour are utterly forgotten. He will rejoice in the thought of Romeo and Juliet at Verona, without vexing himself with doubts as to the authenticity of the lovers' tomb. He will conjure up the fables of antiquity while viewing the shattered temples at Agrigentum, rising with venerable grace in the twilight, and cease to grumble because the fleas disturbed his *siesta*. He will enjoy the picturesque street, as he is whirled over its noisy pavement by lamp-light; and chat pleasantly with the Tuscan peasant by the river side. He will kneel in the Cathedral of Milan, and suffer his soul to rise on the wings of a Catholic anthem. He will linger at a Swiss village for the sake of growing familiar with a fine prospect; and frequent the Forum at Rome, by moonlight, to over-

come the disappointment its appearance awakens by day. He will cultivate the society of artists notwithstanding their habiliments are grotesque, and explore a palace that attracts him, although it is not specified in the guide-book. He will tremble with joy over the good tidings from home, and gratefully receive the boon of friendship in a land of strangers. The wild expectancy of the arrival, the tearful excitement of the departure, the teeming language of new scenes and unaccustomed society, the sights, the sounds, the sensations, the thoughts and emotions—all the phenomena of a pilgrimage, will be to him a stirring and memorable experience. To him every new locality will prove an inspiration. The tomb of genius will be as a holy shrine, the mountain-top as an altar of God. The battle-ground will vibrate with the murderous pageantry of war, and the fertile valley breathe the peacefulness of Eden. He will bless Guido for renewing to his fancy the pensive countenance of Beatrice, and Salvator for instructing his eye in the wild combinations of forest scenery. He will meet Shylock on the Rialto, and hear the echoes of Tully's voice beside the temple of Jupiter. He will recognise Dr. Bellario in the dark-robed student of Padua, and the fetters of Columbus will clank in his ears, amid the narrow thoroughfares of Genoa. Chivalric legends will beguile him upon the ramparts of Malta, and he will reverently recite the Beatitudes in the olive-gardens of Palestine. The scattered grey of Mary Stuart's auburn locks will gleam before his fancy at Holyrood, and Byron's melancholy story haunt his walks at Venice. Every windmill in Spain reminds him of Don Quixote, and he will think of Cleopatra's pearl as he quaffs wine in Egypt. To him it is no mystery that the Moor drew from Desdemona "a prayer of earnest heart" that he "would all his pilgrimage dilate," nor that the story

won her. All that history has chronicled, and poetry consecrated, will mingle and glow in the mind of the enthusiastic traveller. And without this warmth of fancy and moral sensibility, the experience of travel is cold and unredeemed. It is through sympathy with characters of renown or ideal beauty, that their forms are invoked, and without these radiant images to people the lonely dungeon and the silent shore, the wild glen and the modernized edifice, how unattractive would they often be! "The beings of the mind are not of clay," and he who would enjoy the associations of travel, must have learned to reverence Nature and genius, and be a lover of his race; he who would realize its best results, must be an ardent votary of improvement, and open his heart to its teachings. The light which is to throw a halo around the ruin, the picture, and the mountain, must originate in his own mind. The charm that elicits social delight, must proceed from himself. The talisman of sympathy which is to unlock the treasures of travel, must be carried in his own bosom.

MUSIC.

> And when the stream of sound
> Which overflowed the soul, had passed away,
> A consciousness survived that it had left
> Deposited upon the silent shore
> Of memory, images and gentle thoughts—
> Which cannot die and will not be destroyed.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THERE is a poetry of sound, susceptibility to which is wholly independent of science. Taste for this exquisite pleasure may be cultivated to the highest degree, by those who have no musical skill, and are ignorant even of the vocabulary of the art. Perhaps, indeed, music is felt by none so much as those to whom it is a sweet mystery, a luxury never analysed, an unexplored avenue leading, at once, and by a process too enchanting to examine, into the happy precincts of the ideal world. To such minds the vagueness of music is one of its greatest charms. To them it occasions no surprise to remember that musicians were anciently deemed seers; and that even Christians followed an idolatrous example, and canonized Cecilia when the Muses were no more. They can sympathize with the monk of Catania, whose dying request it was, to be buried beneath the organ whose harmonies had so long blessed him. Like the opium-eater, they love to "construct out of the raw material of organic sound, an elaborate intellectual pleasure." They delight to lose, or rather quicken their consciousness in the inspiring atmosphere of song. "Succession," says Burke, "gives the idea of continuing on to infinity." Perhaps this accounts for the spell which music exerts over imaginative spirits. It is a magic

river, down which they float to the verge of the infinite. Without the definiteness of sculpture and painting, music is, for that very reason, far more suggestive. Like Milton's Eve, an outline, an impulse is furnished, and the imagination does the rest. Anticipation, that mighty principle of happiness, is called into immediate action. Expectancy is constantly aroused. "The essence of musical feeling," says an ingenious writer, "consists in this,—that we endeavor, from a sense of pleasure, to dwell on and even to perpetuate in our minds, some kind of emotion of a joyful or painful nature." Music thus seems the prelude to that perfect satisfaction, that entire expression of itself, for which the heart is ever aspiring:—

"The golden key
That opes the palace of eternity."

Viewed in this light, as a mental excitement, an element and a means of spiritual life, it is difficult to overrate the importance and interest attached to music. Although Condillac pushed the idea to absurdity, it is very evident that sensation is the grand medium of universal impression. Through this, let abstract philosophers argue as they may, men are to be most surely reached and powerfully affected. The delicate structure of the nervous system, a branch of physiology which still baffles scientific research, proves its agency to be most subtle and extensive. Explain it as we may, a martial strain will urge a man into the front ranks of battle sooner than an argument, and a fine anthem excite his devotion more certainly than a logical discourse. Even Dr. Johnson acknowledged the effect produced upon his mental mood by riding in a post-chaise. Schiller was indebted to champagne, and Shelley to magnetism. Coleridge was addicted to opium, and Milton loved a pipe. Far more

intellectual as a solace and pure as an excitement is music. Could we penetrate further into the facts of nature, perhaps it would be discovered that the most ethereal of physical influences is sound, and that music is the element in which matter and spirit most nearly assimilate. A more refined sense and a deeper sensibility would doubtless reveal more of the poetry of sound than we can now imagine. It has been suggested that as the telescope enables us to see stars otherwise invisible, so auditory tubes might be constructed by which we could hear the music of the spheres. Nature's music falls upon inattentive ears. The wind awakens harmonies innumerable, and too various to be transcribed. The ocean is an infinite organ of sound. Forests are mighty harps; and every brook "makes music with the enamelled stones." Yet how rare is the auditor, who, like Beethoven, could sit on a stile out in the summer noon-tide, and gather up the blending music of creation, to repeat in new combinations or more striking forms:

> "While mellow warble, sprightly trill
> The tremulous heart excite;
> And hums the balmy air to still
> The balance of delight."

There is perhaps no better definition of music than—the language of the soul. Thus regarded, it is a curious and pleasing speculation to trace its effects upon man, and note how it mingles with the experience of those distinguished by eminent gifts or rare achievements. Wherever the poetic temperament obtains, wherever human nature is discussed by a master-spirit, we find the poetry of sound recognised as the true dialect of emotion, and adopted, as it were, spontaneously, as a medium of expression, a profound solace, a rich stimulus or a graceful

diversion. As a language, then, consider its universality. The Spanish muleteer chants the ballads of his country amid her lonely hills; beneath her palaces is heard the tinkle of the guitar, and in her fields the clink of castanets. The Savoyards carry over the world their mountain songs. The German waltzes enliven the saloons of civilized Europe. The shrill bagpipe wakes the echoes of the Highlands, and Paganini's violin filled the concert rooms of St. Petersburgh. Amid the ruins of Rome, at Christmas, the savage Calabrian plays his wild reeds; and the streets of Paris resound with the Marseillaise. A London audience hail the national anthem, and the American Indians have their war-whoop and death-song. From the time that Tubal picked up the tortoise-shell and found it a lyre, to Donizetti's last opera, how perfectly has music represented man!

Italy is emphatically the land of music, and the phenomena the art there presents, afford ample evidence that its true origin and object is feeling. Public enthusiasm there sustains and exalts music. An appreciating and devoted audience there awaits the children of song. In Naples, a musical plagiarism is at once detected at the theatre; and in all the principal cities, the artist is confident that every public effort of his genius will meet with instant and grateful recognition. A not less striking indication of the powerful hold this diversion has upon the popular mind in Italy, is the facility with which the artisans adopt favorite airs, and the skill with which a casual band of night-strollers strike spontaneously into a new chorus. The honors lavished upon the *prima donna* are equally significant. The well-timed applause, the shower of wreaths, the torch-bearing procession, and the more private tokens of admiration bestowed upon these queens of song, render their triumphs, though brief, the most brilliant of modern times

When Malibran was passing through Arezzo the inhabitants secreted her horses, and assembling in the principal piazza, beneath the hotel windows, refused to allow her to proceed until she had favored them with a popular air. Their town was too small for a large theatre, and they adopted this course in despair of ever hearing in any other way, the voice with whose fame all Italy rang. Farinelli purchased a duchy. Pasta's residence on the banks of Lake Como is a beautiful evidence of her success; and the cultivated friends around her, still keep alive the consideration her splendid career excited. Catalani at the age of sixty lived, for years, in honored retirement in one of the most delightful villas in the neighborhood of Florence. Bellini's memory is cherished in Sicily as the redeeming genius of that unhappy island. In the old world, music is the subtle language through which restricted talent finds scope—the cheering atmosphere in which poverty seeks refreshment—the elevating element in which even the victims of despotism breathe freely. The *bravi* who were hired to despatch Stradella abandoned the meditated crime with horror, after hearing him sing. Keller, a poor perukemaker, received the still poorer Haydn into his house, merely from having enjoyed his voice at the cathedral.

It is worthy of remark that the productions of composers are finished as soon as imagined. No medium of human expression is so fresh, so directly the offspring of sentiment. That it has to do with the very depths of our nature is evident from the melancholy which characterizes all impassioned music. It addresses the memory with singular power. How often it breaks up at once the deep of the affections, and conjures back all that is beautiful and dear in the domain of the past!

Anecdotes of celebrated composers are full of interest. Haydn imagined a little romance, and then wrote it out in music

Glück kindled his fancy by sitting at the piano in the midst of a beautiful meadow. One composer could only invent with a diamond ring upon his finger, the donative of an illustrious friend; and another read one of Petrarch's sonnets to awaken his "fine phrensy." Many of the fragments which Bellini left are so marked as to show they were written under the influence of feelings resulting from personal experience. It was his custom to incorporate these fruits of private sentiment into his operas. Hence, doubtless, their reality of style and truth of expression.

Even the physical effects of music are but very partially explored. The beautiful story of David's consoling strains, so finely embodied in Alfieri's Saul, is doubtless but faintly typical of the power of harmony in cases of mental malady. "The Devil is of a melancholy cast," says Luther, "and music soon drives him away." Invalids of nervous temperament may raise their tone of health to an astonishing degree, by frequenting musical entertainments. Haydn's biographer declares himself cured of a fever by a fine mass. Philip V. of Spain, when a confirmed hypochondriac, was alive to nothing but music. Whoever has witnessed the tranquil state sometimes induced by melody in cases of violent insanity, or traced the world of meaning which the blind realize in cultivating sound, will appreciate the undiscovered efficacy of music as a resource and a restorative. In this country we are scarcely aware of the capabilities of the human voice. Prevented by the vicissitudes of our climate from living much in the open air, accustomed to small rooms and often educated in social restraint, the voice is unnaturally subdued, and rarely cultivated with freedom and science.

The occasions of the art are as various as the exigencies and aspects of human life. Our triumphs would indeed prove dull,

and our wants wasting, were not this sweet resource provided. Miriam celebrated, with her timbrel, the escape of her people from bondage, and Jephtha's daughter went out to meet him with a song. The morning stars sang together at the dawn of creation, and the melody of angels hailed the rising star of Bethlehem. The fame of the Moors of Spain has found its best echo in legendary songs; and Byron sums up the woes of Venice in one line, when he tells us that

"Songless rows the silent gondolier."

The lover soothes his impatient heart, and the loved plumes the wings of her affection, as the serenade floats through the moonlit air. The infant falls asleep upon its mother's bosom to the lulling strain of a nursery song; and the aged man who has died in honor, is laid in his grave with the solemn harmony of the dirge. The grace of festivity is the banquet song; and the tears of repentance become sublime amid the solemn pathos of the *miserere*. The bitterness of bondage passes from the slave's heart as his chant accompanies the plashing oar; and the fear of death is lost in valorous resolves, as the trumpet's onset falls on the ear of the soldier. The nun forgets the world she regrets, when joining in the vesper hymn; and the belle is, for a moment, redeemed from the thrall of fashion, when alone with her harp. Blind and maimed though he be, the strolling musician smiles blandly as he plays; and the peasant thinks the world his own, as his reed welcomes the sunset hour.

How nobly music mingles with the lives of the good and great! In early youth, the author of the Reformation endeavored to support himself by singing in the streets. This he quaintly calls "bread music." In later years his heroic spirit found scope in hymns of devotion, and when his great work was

finished, these sacred melodies were sung by the tearful multitude that clustered around his coffin. What a sublime picture does Milton present seated at his organ, raising those sightless orbs, whose darkness only made the light within him more bright, while his aspirations found a response in the solemn strain. Haydn was wont to muse upon God's goodness until the "fire burned," and then he penned those devotional compositions which have kindled a like flame in countless hearts. Mary Stuart's captivity was cheered by her lute; and Galileo turned from the abstruse researches of science to the refreshment of music. It is related of Maria Antoinette that, when standing before her inhuman judges, she thrummed the bar with her fingers, as if it were a piano, and seemed endeavoring to support her courage by wandering, in fancy, through some remembered melody. The wild fancy of Salvator expatiated in the boundless domain of sound, not less than amid the forest scenes of the Appenines. Mozart, we are told, was a king at the piano, though inadequate elsewhere. His love for Constance Weber found splendid expression in an opera; while the shadow of death lost its gloom in the fervor of soul with which he composed his mysterious requiem. Old Walton, while at his favorite pastime, cheered by the singing of the birds, was wont to ejaculate, "Lord, what music hast thou provided for thy saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth!" How characteristic of Thomson, that he loved to lean out of the window at Richmond, and listen to the nightingales, through the long summer nights; and what a genial resource proved Goldsmith's flute, in his wanderings over the continent!

The effects that consecrate music are chiefly chronicled by the poets. They have cherished the influence and celebrated the triumphs of the art, as kindred to their own. Indeed, the

susceptibility essential to poetic power, is equally alive to the spell of harmony. Moore says he is no poet apart from the sensation of music. Dante, in his Paradise, speaks of the melody that

> "Sounds sweetest here
> And draws the spirit most unto itself;"—

thus recognising one of the striking metaphysical results of the art. Petrarch poured forth his verses to the sound of the lute, which he bequeathes to a friend. His voice was sweet and of great compass. Alfieri sought at the grand opera the inspiration under which his dramas were composed. Dryden has left a noble record of his sense of the power of music in Alexander's Feast. Wordsworth says of Lucy, in his beautiful poem of that name:—

> "The stars of midnight shall be dear
> To her; and she shall lean her ear
> In many a secret place,
> Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
> *And beauty born of murmuring sound*
> *Shall pass into her face.*"

Keats speaks of "music yearning like a god in pain," and in the Eve of St. Agnes, alluding to the consoling influence of church music, exquisitely says, it

> "Flattered to tears the aged man and poor."

Shelley's description of music, of which he was passionately fond, and to whose every inspiration he was singularly susceptible, is equally fanciful and characteristic:

"The silver key of the fountain of tears,
Where the spirit drinks till the brain is wild,
Softest grave of a thousand fears,
Where their mother Care, like a weary child,
Is laid asleep in flowers."

Milton's deep sense of the beautiful in sound, is expressed in many instances with his usual power and felicity. To him music was an immense consolation. Pleasure at one sense "quite shut out," the other overflowed with enjoyment. In Comus, the poet recorded, in language too grand and musical ever to be forgotten, his estimation of the "soft and solemn breathing sound,"

"At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of Darkness, till it smiled."

Can the utmost familiarity ever rob that passage of its charm? But of all the poets, Shakspeare has most perfectly suggested the philosophy of music. When suspicion has blighted the affection of the Moorish warrior, he bids a solemn farewell to the "shrill trump, the spirit-stirring drum and the ear-piercing fife." The charm they once possessed is dispelled with love's departed melody. Richard III. can find no pleasure in the art save as a rude minister to his testy ambition, a sound to drown the railings of his bereaved accuser. "Strike up, I say"—is a command, with the attendant circumstances, singularly illustrative of his tyrannical character. Sir Toby Belch talks of rousing "the night-owl with a catch;" and Jacques declares he "can suck melancholy out of a song as a weasel sucks eggs." What significance in Cæsar's objection to Cassius—"he hears no music!" What an effective touch of description, bringing into

view all the delicacy and tenderness of the female character, in Lear's observation of Cordelia :—

> " Her voice was ever soft,
> Gentle and low ;—an excellent thing in woman."

Desdemona's baffled heart seeks a relief in the willow song, accordant with her gentle nature. Ophelia's madness finds an expression in her pensive strains most appropriate to her fanciful temperament. It comports with the ideal character of the Tempest, that Ariel's melody should draw Ferdinand to Miranda; and how finely has the poet portrayed a lover's yearning for pathetic music, in the Duke's command to his page, in Twelfth Night :—

> " Now, good Cesario, that piece of song,
> That old and antique song we heard last night,
> Methought it did relieve my passion much ;
> More than light airs and recollected terms,
> Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times ;—
> Come, but one verse.
>
> * * * * * * * *
>
> ———It is old and plain :
> The spinners and the knitters in the sun,
> And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
> Did use to chant it : it is silly sooth,
> And dallies with the innocence of woe
> Like the old age."

From the tender strain which gives " an echo to the seat where love is throned," to the "sweet thunder" of the Spartan hounds; from the mysterious harmony of invisible spirits, to the hearty carollings of conviviality, Shakspeare has introduced and depicted music with a marvellous truth to human nature. How

exquisitely is Cleopatra's fond caprice displayed, in this brief colloquy after Antony's departure :—

Cleo. Give me some music ; music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.
Attendant. The music, ho !
Cleo. Let it alone ; let us to billiards ;
Come, Charmian.

The proud queen, even in reference to an art whose "voluptuous swell" was so adapted to her luxurious tastes, is still described,

"As variable as the shade
By the light, quivering aspen made."

In the Merchant of Venice, we have, as it were, an epitome of our subject. The power of music, its association with the deep things of the heart, its divine accordance with the bright serenity of nature, its sweet response to the bliss of reciprocated affection, the comfort it affords the sorrowful—all its meaning and its truth, are here casually but vividly sketched. When viewed in relation to the respective scenes and persons, these touches of the poet, if faithfully conned, are more significant than a whole volume of comments on the poetry of sound.

CONVERSATION.

"The good in conversation,
To whom I give my benison."

PERICLES.

FAMILIAR as the word is, true conversation is a great rarity. It implies a disinterested communion of thought, an interchange of ideas. It is essentially a play of the mind, but one that calls out the grace and vigor acquired in its severest toils. Most people of intelligence either argue or discourse; they find no pleasure in receiving your thought and carrying it forward, or increasing its volume, but accept it rather as a hint from which to start on a rhetorical survey, or an antagonist to exercise their logical skill. A celebrated English reviewer of the present day is one of the most brilliant talkers in London society. His language and his information seem equally inexhaustible, and they absolutely inundate the listener; but, for this very reason, he is altogether unsatisfactory in conversation; for, in case his auditor has the energy to resist the impetuosity of manner and flood of words, and insists upon throwing in occasionally a thought of his own, the other party has recourse to argument. Thus he lectures with the weak, and fights logical battles with the strong, but converses with neither. His contact with the one is like that of the Nile with the Egyptian fields; and with the other, it exactly resembles the adroit, keen, and flashing encounter of a gentleman's foil. He must either communicate or oppose; but is incompetent to assimilate with, or felicitously draw out

another's mind; and this is the secret charm of genuine conversation; for if we look narrowly at the process, the very distinction between it and the task of the professed advocate or clergyman, is that in conversation we are unconscious of the limits of our own part; there is so mutual an unfolding of the subject, such an identity of the mental action, that we can say with the poet,—

> "It seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
> That but half of it was his, and half of it was mine."

Indeed, the primal quality of conversation is its suggestiveness. It would otherwise be no more desirable than a sermon or a plea—a thing to be received and considered as a whole, instead of the gradually progressive current made up of tributary streams, which harmoniously blend and flow onward. Perhaps there is no way in which conversation can be more clearly recognised as such, than by its effect. This is always refreshing. We are weary at a dull sermon, or irritated at a long speech, because the mind is forced to an inactive endurance, while in conversation, it is animated by having to respond as well as accept. Hence there are few more rational solaces for the ills of life than conversation. It acts almost magically upon some temperaments, diverting the mood, quickening the faculties, and giving elasticity to the spirits; for, like everything relating to human beings, conversation has its physiological relations; and it is partly because these are so vaguely realized, that its utility is unappreciated. I was struck with the remark of an eccentric physician, for one of whose patients I inquired. "Sir," he replied, "she needs gossip." It appeared the lady was living in a silent family, and found no vent for her repressed spirits in small-talk. A few chatty visitors were provided, and she was

a new being. The volubility of the sex has long been a staple idea for playwrights and cynics; but there is nothing truly characteristic in nature that is not justified by a general and wise law. Expression is a moral and physical necessity; discourage it entirely, and the mind is disordered or overthrown. Hence the controversies in regard to solitary confinement in prison discipline. Nearly all the tragic catastrophes of human life originate in baffled utterance. A deep feeling allowed to accumulate and centralize in the soul, without breathing itself in friendly conference, or song, or prayer, becomes so intense that it finally absorbs consciousness; hence fanaticism and insanity. Now the best hygiene for the mind is conversation. A painful idea or an emotion, when it is made objective by being talked over, loses, in a great degree, its horror or its woe. There is exquisite nature in the desolate queen's adjuration,

> "Come, let us sit upon the ground,
> And tell sad stories of the death of kings."

But these are exigencies only. As a preventive to that unhealthy excess into which opinion and sentiment are apt to run, when too much individualized and partially cherished, conversation is at once natural and effective. To the stagnant or overwrought brain, the stimulus of agreeable colloquy gives a wonderful relief. There is between speech and thought a relation far more complex than philosophy has yet discovered. From the inarticulate moan of an infant, to the most eloquent utterance of the poet, the growth and integrity of the mind is vitally associated with expression.

It is said that taciturn women are never healthy; and Congreve declares, in one of his comedies—"Once a man comes to

his soliloquies, I give him up for gone,"—an indirect tribute to the salubrity of free discussion. The "Noctes" of Wilson are one of the most successful attempts to give the zest of conversation to writing; but even these grow tedious occasionally, from the absence of the living voice and naturalness of suggestion; yet they convey an excellent idea of the relief which active minds experience in mere utterance. One sympathizes with the need of the shepherd to let off the poetical electricity harvested by his moorland reveries, and fancies him going back to his solitude with a less teeming brain and more quickened fancy.

Nature asserts herself with peculiar freedom in some persons, especially the candid, imaginative, and ardent. In the present state of society, it is difficult to say what safety-valve for these anti-conventionalists is available, except free utterance. In action, that formidable *duenna*, Respectability, checks impulse quite effectually; but as there must be a vent somewhere for the unaccepted yet constantly generated produce of the brain, it finds its way out through the tongue, and the most provoking of all auditors are the literal class;—those who have a natural incapacity for taking a joke, look solemn at the announcement of a daring speculation, and remain entrenched in the fortress of material propriety, while the speaker is revelling in the world of fancy. It is the rarest thing in life to meet with a fellow-creature whose influence does not, at some point, veto the play of our idiosyncrasies. It requires so much liberality of mind, such a quickness and breadth of sympathy, and thorough trustworthiness, to be the recipient, at once, of the faith, the thought, and the humor of another, that most of us are driven, by necessity, into a kind of conversational eclecticism,—having a mood for each friend, and a phase of character ready to revolve in sight, according to the demands of every new companion.

Shelley and Allston excelled in superstitious talk. Their ghost-stories affected the auditor, even if the circumstances were viewed with levity, on account of the spiritual insight which breathed from the narrative. The conversation of a distinguished living wit has been compared to the successive discharge of a Liliputian park of artillery, so apt, quick, and effective, in a small way, is his most incidental byway talk. The concealed bitterness of Swift's apparently good-natured conversation, the fine rhetoric of Burke's animated observations on a public question, and the good sense of Reynolds in discussing a point of taste, are quite characteristic of the men, the order of their genius, and the spirit of their lives.

Shakspeare frequently realizes the connexion between habitual speech and principles of action, or the *morale* of conversation. Thus *Octavia's* temperament is perfectly described by the fact cited, that she "is of a holy, cold, and still conversation." *Prince Henry* banishes *Falstaff* and his companions,

> "Till their conversations
> Appear more wise and modest to the world."

"I praise God for you, sir," says another of his characters; "your reasons, at dinner, have been sharp and sententious, pleasant without scurrility, witty without affectation, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy." And *Hamlet* thus commends his friend:

> "Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
> As e'er my conversation coped withal."

The appliances so generally considered needful when people come together, in order to speed the time, is a glaring proof of the rarity of conversational gifts. Games of chance, tableaux,

and dancing, are little more than substitutes for talk; and it has become an art in fashionable society, how to beguile the company. Hence the sumptuous entertainments which, in this republican land, to so large an extent prevent the most socially rich from entering the arena of what is called society; and yet, if we cast an observing glance upon the crowds at an assembly, their restlessness, forced merriment, and ill-concealed weariness, betray the insipidity of the occasion. It is difficult to recall the parties we have attended, such is their monotony and want of interest; but many an informal colloquy—the discussion around the fireside, or the casual discourse of a promenade, often leave indelible and grateful impressions. The diplomacy of what may be called professional visiting, is fatal to bold utterance. We habitually exchange common-places. It seems inappropriate, and would be eccentric, to say anything very sincere or eloquent. Thus, to develop, we must have not only confidence in ourselves, but in our auditor. Agreeableness is the ideal of fashion; vanity the only feeling that under her espionage we can safely address. Hence the tactician succeeds when the gifted fail; and the atmosphere that sustains a butterfly unnerves the eagle.

If conversation be an art, like painting, sculpture, and literature, it owes its most powerful charm to nature; and the least shade of formality or artifice destroys the effect of the best collocation of words. There is no affectation that so excites impatience as that of conversation. We can forgive it in manners and letter-writing, far more easily; but to "talk like a book," is to abrogate, for the time being, the human interest which is the true privilege of speech. We cannot associate formal display with conversation, the very essence of which is spontaneity. In the memoirs of a French lady recently

published, there is an anecdote which illustrates the ridiculous light in which the attempt to show off a person in conversation, always results. A duchess who had chosen the lady in question as her friend, on account of her talents, used to introduce her thus: "This is the young lady *qui a un si grand esprit, qui sait tant de choses;*" then, *sotto voce*, to her protegée—"*parlez!* [she hesitates]—*parlez un peu de religion!*" Of course, a profound and embarrassed silence was always the consequence of this appeal; and the good duchess could only wonder how one who chatted away so brilliantly in her boudoir, remained mute when such desirable opportunities were given her to converse! This "trotting out" system reached its acme at a town in the West, where a literary gentleman from the North, being invited to a tea-party, when the company had all assembled, was horrified to hear the host ring a small bell and exclaim—"Hush, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. ——— is going to talk!"

The felicities of conversation are accidental. They must, as Webster says of eloquence, "exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion." Like the lion's roaring in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, really fine talking is extempore. Hence any trace of premeditation despoils it of freshness. Certain diners-out, assured of their company, provide themselves with apt quotations and conversational material adapted to the individuals, but it is more than probable that such forced introduction "plagues the inventor." Memorable conversation springs from a blending of earnestness and humor. It is like the gushing music of the sky-lark—a kind of irrepressible harmony of language and thought unconsciously emitted from an overflowing mind. The only available rule for effective discourse is self-forgetfulness; let the theme, the companion, the glow of

the moment inspire, and a man of reflection or sentiment talks "far above singing." He is unawares an *improvisatore*, and says better things than he writes—we had almost said, than he thinks—for the presence of some individuals, or the local associations of the hour, so color and uplift his thoughts, that they pass "into the life of things."

It is amusing to detect character in the vocabulary of each person. The adjectives habitually used, like the inscriptions on a thermometer, indicate the temperament. Genuine enthusiasts employ extreme phrases. To them there is no comparative degree. Everything is either hateful or glorious; and everybody either flat or interesting. A more subdued tone of feeling reveals itself in modified expressions, as "dull" and "agreeable;" and a dogmatist may be known, at once, by the emphatic words he so frequently uses, and the absence of all qualifying terms such as "perhaps" and "it may be." The conversation of acute men, like Hazlitt, quickens the intellect; that of soulful natures, like Coleridge, kindles the imagination; that of "good fellows," like Goldsmith, warms the heart. To impress, we must be in earnest; to amuse, it is only requisite to be kindly and fanciful. To a generous spirit, however, no discovery is so chilling as that of the selfish basis of a regard which begins and ends in the desire to be entertained. We can imagine no phase of life more melancholy than the barter of fine conversational powers for material advantage. It is the desecration of a noble gift. Such a biography as that of Hook, is sad beyond expression—depicting, as it does, a man of genius, isolated, physically exhausted, and aspiring, yet eking out existence by daily oblations of wit, to grace the banquets of the wealthy; and no more recognised beyond his vocation than the juggler or itinerant musician.

The hobby-talkers have been well satirized in modern novels, —people who are living illustrations of Madame de Stael's remark, that "when we are much attached to our ideas we endeavor to connect everything with them." Claude Halcro's constant references to his acquaintance with Dryden in Scott's *Pirate*, the rogue's available theory of cosmography in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and Mrs. Pipchin's allusions to her husband's loss in the Peruvian mines, in *Dombey and Son*, are among the numerous instances. It really seems as if a class of persons are capable of familiarly entertaining but one idea, or being impressed with but one experience. Before the advent of these, life to them is a blank, after it a reminiscence.

In regard to the questioning class, there is an observation in Consuelo, which we commend to their especial attention: "Curiosity is so closely allied to perfidy as to make the finest face look ugly." It also deforms the beauty of conversation when made its prevailing feature. It is a selfish inquisitorial spirit, which regards another chiefly as a repository of facts, or a subject for psychological experiment; delicacy and pride are, at once, and justly, offended, and the free and sympathetic play of the mind repressed. Yet some persons seem unable to understand how it is possible to converse without unremitted interrogations, as if there were no such thing as thinking aloud, regardless of scientific precision or personal facts. Another repulsive order of talkers are the shrewd—those whose only and constant aim it is "to make the worse appear the better reason."

Tact is an essential principle of conversation; hence, the eastern metaphor which likens a word spoken in season, to "apples of gold in pictures of silver." The time and the society must regulate the subject. We cannot wonder at the astonish-

ment of a southern gentleman, to whom his quadrille partner at a New England ball, abruptly said, as they *chasséd* to and fro, "don't you doat upon Wordsworth?" Some people have a way of turning the most common-place chit-chat into a dissertation. They get on stilts at once. Others, with a large organ of language, and indifferent reflective powers, send forth a torrent of words without consciously associating them with any thought. They are literally human parrots. The language they utter is derived from verbal memory; it comes from a sermon they have heard, or the observations of a wiser head, and is evolved with as little sense of its meaning as an automaton has of the syllables it is made to utter. The fluency and glibness of this class of talkers is apt to deceive not a few, who mistake command of language, or rather word-possession, for ability to think. The truth is, however, and mental philosophy of late years has exemplified it very clearly, that expression and mental force, sentiment and eloquence, but seldom bear a just proportion to each other; and this is the chief reason why we find so little good conversation. It is certain that we instinctively attach significance to human language—not for its ostensible meaning, but as it derives weight from our estimation of the wisdom and sincerity of the individual who speaks.

I was present at an animated discussion as to the comparative value of various accomplishments, as means of interesting women. Beauty had its advocates, the prestige of wealth or reputation, graces of manner, and tact in flattery; but he who sustained the claims of conversational power was victor in the argument. Talk has, indeed, its blandishments; thus *Iachimo* boasts to *Posthumus*—"With five times as much conversation I should have got ground of your fair mistress;" but as the repre-

sentative of intellect, the exponent of character, conversation appeals to the noblest sympathies of woman's heart. With how much natural truth and beauty this is unfolded in *Othello!* He acknowledges that he has not "those soft parts of conversation that chamberers have;" and yet, by the noble integrity of his utterance, by the unconscious revelation of his brave and earnest feelings, in the narrative for which *Desdemona* gave him "a world of sighs," there was a mighty spell, and one founded in reason as well as nature; for it is wisdom and courage which have the most legitimate attractions for the gentlest beings. There is something illusive in many of the recognised tests of intelligent manliness. The orator or the *littérateur*, by ingenuity, can often produce an impression wholly transcending his genuine calibre; but the instant application of judgment or fancy to the exigencies of the moment—the giving an opinion, expressing a sentiment, interpreting a truth, as occasion suggests, with the aid only of immediate reflection and unpremeditated language—is, after all, the most reliable evidence of an active and vigorous mind.

Landor has published several volumes of "Imaginary Conversations;" and although he seldom re-produces the verbal characteristics of the individuals, yet the mere bringing together men of opinions and experience so diverse gives us an admirable idea of the vast capabilities of conversation. In truth, the best parts of modern literature are based upon interlocution. The drama and the historical novel are essentially dialogues, invented by genius, to exhibit great sentiments or peerless action. The chief distinction between tragedy and comedy is, the existence of earnestness in the one and its absence in the other, which corresponds with that alternation between gravity and humor which we have designated as the principle of all rich mental

intercourse. It has been justly said, that "wit is the eloquence of indifference—the salt of conversation, not its food."—The most satisfactory mental aliment is that derivable from a gloriously endowed living soul. The language of nature, however beautiful and sublime, is not personal or sympathetic; that of books is purely instructive, and only touches us by its assimilation with our conscious life; but conversation, when it is alive with the glow of fancy, enriched by wisdom, and sanctioned by confident regard, embodies and vitally represents, more directly than nature, literature, or art, what we are and would be.

The voice, as the medium of conversation, has no little share in its effects. There is a quality of voice, as well as a management of its tones, and this associates itself, in our minds, with pleasurable or repugnant sensations. To a nice ear, the quality of a voice is singularly affecting. Its depth seems to be allied to feeling; at least, the *contralto* notes alone give an adequate sense of pathos. They are born near the heart. What is called sweetness of voice is by no means an essential charm. On the contrary, if this quality predominates, it is often indicative of subtlety, because unnatural, except under certain impulses. It is a questionable compliment, to declare one has an insinuating tone; for there is something unmanly, or at least affected, in the obvious endeavor to win, implied in a studied gentleness of intonation; whereas even a harsh voice is often more welcome, if its accents have a sustained and honest sound. Dr. Rush has minutely analysed the vocal organs in his celebrated work on the *Philosophy of the Voice*, and intricate and beautiful as their mechanism is, its wonderful relation to the mind, as an exponent of character and states of feeling, is yet more worthy of consideration. One of the most startling evidences of mental aberration is conveyed in the sudden and blood-

chilling alteration in a familiar voice—showing that the connexion between it and reason has been severed. Intelligence is plainly revealed by the voice; its management betrays culture or the reverse, delicacy or rudeness of life, strength of will, and fastidiousness of taste. It is an index which, to a musical organization, is rich in meaning. Lamartine, in his elaborate portrait of Charlotte Corday, says—"the tone of her voice—that living echo which bespeaks the whole soul in a vibration of the air—left a deep and tender impression in the ear of those whom she addressed; and they spoke still of that tone ten years after as of remembered music."

Independent of its quality, the voice affects us in conversation, as blended with the ideas unfolded, or the feelings aroused. Thus defects of speech and lawless elocution have an indefinable charm when associated with the tragic genius of Kean, the stammered wit of Lamb, or the caustic satire of Randolph. A certain thinness of voice often accompanies frivolity of character; a tremulous emphasis, like that of Channing, prolongs the tones of repressed sensibility; and generous people have a cordial tone which makes their greeting peculiarly winsome. There is no music like the voices of those we love; and their similarity in members of the same family, even through different generations, has been often remarked. It is very difficult to cultivate the voice without sacrificing its native peculiarities. The best performers are apt to become theatrical even in ordinary discourse—especially tragedians. The anecdotes related of Mrs. Siddons illustrate how rare it is to escape the habit of a measured utterance when long practised. One of the most fascinating charms of women of exquisite temperaments, is a kind of delayed utterance—the very poetry of that dreamy mood in which beauty "pays tribute to ease." How often do we find

a *naive* spell in a lisp, or hesitancy, or in the faint trace of a brogue, or the singularity of a foreign accent! It is not, therefore, in the mere perfection of the vocal instrument, but rather in the spirit and feeling that informs or attunes it, that we must seek what is delightful and characteristic in the human voice. This subtle element, the efflorescence and spirit of the mind, is very significantly recognised in Madame de Kalb's remark of Jean Paul, "that the tone that his mind gave without conversation, was sweeter than the sounds of the harmonica." Silence, indeed, is the nurse of rich expression, and when it descends upon a gifted soul, we feel as we do in gazing upon the brooding cloud or the fallow earth—a delicious sense of latent and forthcoming power; for the summer lightning is gathered slowly and in quietness; and fertilizing agencies are silently nursed in the field where no harvest yet waves. Expression too, has its limits, and

> "Full oft
> Our thoughts drown speech, like to a foaming force
> Which thunders down the echo it creates:
> Words are like sea-shells on the shore; they show
> Where the mind ends and not how far it has been."

There must be, indeed, a magnetic as well as an intelligent spirit in conversation to render it truly attractive. A well-stored mind, correct and fluent language, ready memory, and gracious manner combined, are yet inadequate—unless penetrated by that vital glow and thorough naturalness, which makes the difference between humanity and an intellectual machine. Without a certain airiness the wisest talk is oppressive; without a degree of *abandon*, it is ungenial; without frankness and ease, it is artificial. Thus a moral beauty, a tone borrowed

rather from the affections than the will, and a kind of childlike self-oblivion and play of thought, underlie and transfuse the best conversation. How rare is it that we encounter the requisite temperament, wit, enthusiasm, and liberality, which united give birth to so rational and felicitous a pleasure! We have scores of categorical talkers who, by a kind of local drainage, exhaust the brain and breath with questions; the aphoristic talkers, or Sir-Oracles, are found in every clique; the rattles, gossips, sentimentalists, Pickwickians, egotists, parlor orators, story-mongers, and Pecksniffs, may be heard buzzing at every party, until the announcement of supper checks the flood of words by an influx of oysters; but of healthy, sensible, yet genial and humorous talkers, what a dearth! The love of display, sterility of thought, insensibility to what is true and beautiful and candid, either freezes or makes shallow the stream, that, fed by the "immortal sea," would either flow nobly or sparkle gaily, as it bears the willing mind along:

> "Not an effort, not a will,
> Yet proceeding swiftly still:
> 'Tis to join in one sensation
> Business both and contemplation;
> Active without toil or stress,
> Passive without listlessness."

The most usual conversational errors are that of dwelling upon details of no interest or importance, and that of indulging in personalities. It is astonishing how exclusive talk of this kind narrows the views. Far better to aspire than compromise in the encounter of mind—to forget petty cares in comprehensive ideas, material influences in random speculation, and self in "thoughts that wander through eternity." When we set aside

the familiarity of the thing, what a noble image is man, in self-possessed and courteous dignity, giving utterance to bold opinion or exquisite perception, loving fancies or high emotion! Hear Longinus in the groves of Palmyra, Michael Angelo in the Medicean garden, the statesmen and authors at Holland House, Madame Roland at the Concierge grate! Gather up the incense of wisdom and love breathed from the lips of the gifted and the true, lost in the passing air of transient feeling, or the clear, bright hours of spiritual illumination; summon back the music of those few haunting tones that have fallen on the heart, like prophecy, and come to it in dreams; imagine how often a thought has stirred "immortal longings,"—a word of recognition confirmed a sublime yet undecided purpose,—a word of sympathy opened a new vista to the desolate, that let in a prospect of heaven,—a word of truth fired a genius to write, or a man of action to do that which redeems a nation or a cause;—and some faint conception may be realized of the infinite possibilities of conversation.

ART AND ARTISTS.

High is our calling, friend! Creative Art,
Whether the instrument of words we use,
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,
Demands the service of a mind and heart,
Though sensitive, yet in their weakest part
Heroically fashioned.

WORDSWORTH.

I WAS attracted, recently, by the unfinished sketch of a young artist, who has since lost his reason from the intense activity of a rarely-gifted, but ill-balanced mind. It struck me as an eloquent symbol of his inward experience—a touching comment upon his unhappy fate. He called the design—"an artist's dream." It represented the studio of a painter. An easel, a palette, a portfolio, and other insignia of the art, are scattered with professional negligence, about the room. At a table sits the youthful painter, his head resting heavily on his arm, buried in sleep. From the opposite side of the canvas the shadowy outline of a long procession seem winding along, the figures growing more distinct as they recede. In the front rank and with more defined countenances, walk the most renowned of the old masters, and pressing hard upon their steps, the humbler members of that noble brotherhood. It was a mere sketch—unfinished, but dimly mapped out, like the career of its author, yet full of promise, and indicative of invention. It revealed, too, the dreams of fame that were agitating that young heart; and proved that his spirit was with the honored leaders of the art. This sketch is a symbol of the life of a true artist. Upon

his fancy throng the images of those whose names are immortal. It is his day-dream to emulate the great departed, to bless his race, to do justice to himself. The early difficulties of their career, and the excitement of their experience, give to the lives of artists a singular interest. West's first expedient to obtain a brush—Barry's proud poverty, Fuseli's vigils over Dante and Milton; Reynolds, the centre of a gifted society; the "devout quiet" of Flaxman's home, and similar memories, crowd upon the mind, intent upon their works. Existence, with them, is a long dream. I have ever honored the fraternity, and loved their society, and musing upon the province they occupy in the business of the world, I seem to recognise a new thread of beauty interlacing the mystic tissue of life. In speaking of the true artist, I allude rather to his principles of action, than to his absolute power of execution. Mediocrity, indeed, is sufficiently undesirable in every pursuit, and is least endurable, perhaps, in those with which we naturally associate the highest ideas of excellence. But when we look upon artists as a class—when we attempt to estimate their influence as a profession, our attention is rather drawn to the tendency of their pursuit, and to the general characteristics of its votaries.

"Man!" says Carlyle, "it is not thy works which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater than the least, but only the spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance." In this point of view, the artist, who has adopted his vocation from a native impulse, who is a sincere worshipper of the beautiful and the picturesque, exerts an insensible, but not less real influence upon society, although he may not rank among the highest, or float on the stream of popularity. Let this console the neglected artist. Let this thought comfort him, possessed of one talent—if the spirit he

worketh in is true, he shall not work in vain. Upon some mind his converse will ingraft the elements of taste. In some heart will his lonely devotion to an innocent but unprofitable object, awaken sympathy. In his very isolation—in the solitude of his undistinguished and unpampered lot, shall he preach a silent homily to the mere devotee of gain, and hallow to the eye of many a philanthropist, the scenes of bustling and heartless traffic.

I often muse upon the life of the true artist until it redeems to my mind, the more prosaic aspects of human existence. It is deeply interesting to note this class of men in Italy. There they breathe a congenial atmosphere. Often subsisting upon the merest pittance, indulging in every vagary of costume, they wander over the land and yield themselves freely to the spirit of adventure and the luxury of art. They are encountered with their portfolios, in the midst of the lone Campagna, beside the desolate ruin, before the master-pieces of the gallery, and in the cathedral-chapel. They roam the streets of those old and picturesque cities, at night, congregate at the café, or sing cheerfully in their studios. They seem a privileged class, and manage, despite their frequent poverty, to appropriate all the delights of Italy. They take long tours on foot in search of the picturesque; engage in warm discussions together on questions of art, and lay every town they visit under contribution for some little romance. It is a rare pastime to listen to the love-tales and wild speculations of these gay wanderers. The ardent youth from the Rhine, the pensioner from Madrid, and the mecurial Parisian, smoke their pipes in concert, and wrangle good-humoredly over national peculiarities as they copy in the palaces. Thorwaldsen is wont to call his birth-day the day on which he entered Rome. And when we consider to what a new

existence that epoch introduces the artist, the expression is scarcely metaphorical. It is the dawning of a fresher and a richer life—the day that makes him acquainted with the wonders of the Vatican, the palace halls lined with the trophies of his profession, the daily walk on the Pincian, the solemn loneliness of the surrounding fields, the beautiful ruins, the long, dreamy day, and all the poetry of life at Rome. Whoever has frequently encountered Thorwaldsen in the crowded saloon, or visited him on a Sabbath morning, must have read in his bland countenance and benignant smile, the record of his long and pleasant sojourn in the Eternal city. To him it was a theatre of triumph and benevolence. But everywhere in Italy are seen the enthusiastic pilgrims of art who have roamed thither from every part of the globe. Each has his tale of self-denial and his vision of fame. At the shrines of Art they kneel together. Year by year they collect, in the shape of sketches and copies, the cherished memorials of their visit. A few linger on until habit makes the country almost necessary to their existence, and they establish themselves in Florence or Rome. Those whom necessity obliges to depart, tear themselves, full of tearful regret, from the genial clime. Many who come to labor, content themselves with admiring, and glide into dreamy habits, from which want alone can rouse them. Others become the most devoted students, and toil with unremitting energy. A French lady, attached to the Bourbon interest, has long dwelt in Italy, intent upon a monument to Charles X. Her talents for sculpture are of a high order, and her enthusiasm for royalty, extreme. Her hair is cut short like that of a man, and she wears a dark robe similar to that with which Portia appears on the stage. Instances of a like self-devotion to a favorite project in art, are very common among those who are voluntary exiles

in that fair land. One reason why the most famous portraits of the old masters, such as the Fornarina of Raphael and La Bella of Titian, are so life-like, and inspire so deep a sense of their authenticity, is doubtless that the originals were objects of affection, and familiar by constant association and sympathy, to the minds of the artists. This idea is unfolded in one of Webster's plays, where the advantage of a portrait taken without a formal sitting is displayed with much quaintness and beauty :—

> " Must you have my picture?
> You will enjoin me to a strange punishment.
> With what a compelled force a woman sits
> While she is drawing! I have noted divers
> Either to feign a smile, or suck in their lips,
> To have a little mouth ; ruffle the cheeks
> To have the dimple seen ; and so disorder
> The face with affectation, at next sitting
> It has not been the same ; I have known others
> Have lost the entire fashion of their face
> In half an hour's sitting,—in hot weather,
> The painting on their face has been so mellow,
> They have left the poor man harder work by half
> To mend the copy he wrought by ; but indeed,
> If ever I should have mine drawn to the life,
> I would have a painter steal at such a time
> I were devoutly kneeling at my prayers ;
> There is then a heavenly beauty in't, the soul
> Moves in the superficies."

Though the mere tyros in the field of letters and of art, those who pursue these liberal aims without either the genius that hallows, or the disinterestedness that redeems them, are not worthy of encouragement—let respect await the artist whose life and conversation multiply the best fruits of his profession—

whose precept and example are effective, although nature may have endowed him with but a limited practical skill. There is a vast difference between a mere pretender and one whose ability is actual, but confined. A man with the soul of an artist is a valuable member of society, although his eye for color may be imperfect, or his drawing occasionally careless. There is, in truth, no more touching spectacle than is presented by a human being whose emotions are vivid, but whose expression is fettered; in whose mind is the conception which his hand struggles in vain to embody, or his lips to utter. It is a contest between matter and spirit which angels might pity. It is this very struggle on a broad scale which it is the great purpose of all art and all literature to relieve. "It is in me, and it shall come out," said Sheridan, after his first failure as an orator. And the trial of Warren Hastings brought it out. If we could analyse the pleasure derived from the poet and painter, I suppose it would partake much of the character of *relief*. A great tragedy unburdens the heart. In fancy we pour forth the love, and partake of the sacrifice. And so art gratifies the imagination by reflecting its pictures. The lovely landscape, the faithful portrait, the good historical composition, repeat with more or less authenticity, the story that fancy and memory have long held in a less defined shape. The rude figures on old tapestry, the miniature illustrations of ancient missals, the arabesques that decorate the walls of the Alhambra, are so many early efforts to the same end. The inventive designer, the gifted sculptor, the exquisite vocalist, are ministers of humanity, ordained by Heaven. The very attempt to fulfil such high service, so it be made in all truthfulness, is worthy of honor. And where it is partially fulfilled there is occasion for gratitude. Hence I cannot but regard the worthy members of such profes-

sions with peculiar interest. They have stepped aside from the common thoroughfare to cultivate the flowers by the way-side. They have left the great loom of common industry, to weave "such stuff as dreams are made of." Their office is to keep alive in human hearts, a sense of the grand in combination, the symmetrical in form, the beautiful in color, the touching in sound, the interesting in aspect, of all outward things. They illustrate even to the senses, that truth which is so often forgotten—that man does not live by bread alone. As the sunlight is gorgeously reflected by the clouds, they tint even the tearful gloom of mortal destiny with the warm hues of beauty. Artists instruct and refine the senses. With images of grace—with smiles of tenderness—with figures of noble proportions—with tones of celestial melody, they teach the careless heart to distinguish and rejoice in the richest attractions of the world. He who has pondered over the landscapes of Salvator will thenceforth pierce the tangled woodlands with a keener glance, and mark a ship's hulk upon the stocks with unwonted interest. John of Bologna's Mercury will reveal to him the poetry of motion, and the Niobe or the statue of Lorenzo, in the Medici Chapel, make him aware how greatly mere attitude can express the eloquence of grief. The vocalism of a *prima donna* will unveil the poetical labyrinths of sound. Claude will make him sensible of masses of golden haze before unobserved, and long scintillations of sunlight gleaming across the western sky. The neck and hair of woman will be better appreciated after studying Guido; and the characteristic in physiognomy become more striking, from familiarity with the portraits of Vandyke. Hogarth, in the humble walk he adopted, not only successfully satirized the vices and follies of London, but gave the common people no small insight into the humorous scenes of their sphere; and

Gainsborough attracted attention to many a feature of rustic beauty. Pasta, Catalani, and Malibran have opened a new world in music to countless souls, and Mrs. Wood produced an era in the musical taste of our land. The artist thus instructs our vision and hearing. But his teachings end not here. From his portraitures of martyrdoms, of the heroic in human history, of the beautiful in human destiny, whether pencilled or sung, he breathes into the soul new self-respect, and moral refinement. We look at the Magdalen prostrate upon the earth, pressing back the luxuriant hair from her lovely temples, her melancholy eyes bent downward, and the lesson of repentance, the blessedness of "loving much," sinks at once into the heart. We muse upon Raphael's Holy Family, and realize anew the sanctity of maternal affections. We commune with the long, silent line of portraits—the gifted and the powerful of the earth, and read, at a glance, the most stirring chronicles of war and genius, of effort and suffering, of glory and death. We drink in the tender harmony of Bellini, and the fountains of sentiment are renewed.

The golden age of Art and Artists, the splendid era that dawned early in the fifteenth century, is one of the most romantic episodes in human history. The magnificent scale of princely patronage, the brilliant succession of unsurpassed productions, and the trials and triumphs of artists that signalize that epoch, place it in the very sunshine of poetry. There is something in the long lives of those eminent men toiling to illustrate the annals of faith, pursuing the beautiful, under the banner of religion, that gives an air of primeval happiness to human toil, and robs the original curse of its bitterness. The lives of the old masters partake of the ideal character of their creations. Scarcely one of their biographies is devoid of adventurous inte-

rest or pathetic incident. Can we not discover in the tone of their works, somewhat of their experience and character? As the poet's effusions are often unintentionally tinged with his moral peculiarities, is there not a certain identity of spirit between the old artists and their works? Leonardo supped with peasants and related humorous stories to make them laugh, that he might study the expression of rustic delight; by writing, conversation, and personal instruction, he promoted that most important revolution, the reconciliation of nicety of finish with nobleness of design and unity of color; and having thus prepared the way for a higher and more perfect school of art, expired in the embrace of a king. The thought of his efforts as a reformer, and the precursor of the great prophets of art, imparts a grateful sentiment to the mind of the spectator who dwells upon his Nun in the Pitti-palace, the Herodias of the Tribune, and the Last Supper at Milan. In the variety of expression displayed in the various heads and attitudes of this last work, we recognise the effect of Leonardo's studies from nature. It is singular that the chief monument to his fame should, of all his works, have met with the greatest vicissitudes. The feet were cut off to enlarge the refectory, upon the walls of which it is painted, and a door has been made through the finest part. It is with a melancholy feeling, that the traveller gazes upon its dim and corroded hues, and vainly strives to trace the clear outlines of a work made familiar by so many engravings. From Leonardo's precision of ideas, the strictness of taste that marked his personal habits, and his attachment to principles of art, something even of the mathematician is recognised in his works. It might be argued from his pictures, that he was no sloven and was fond of rules. Titian's long career of triumph and prosperity was cheerful and rich as the hues of his canvas, dream-like as his

own Venice; his fair and bright-haired mistress, his honors and wealth, contrasting strangely with a death amid pestilence and desertion, come over the memory like a vivid picture. In infancy, Titian colored a print of the Virgin with the juice of flowers, in a masterly manner. In early youth he deserted his teachers for the higher school nature opened to him. The passers uncovered to his portrait of Paul III., as it rested on a terrace at Rome, deeming it alive; and when Charles V. of Spain sat to him for the last portrait, he exclaimed, "This is the third time I have been made immortal!" These exuberant tokens of contemporary appreciation—these, and countless other indications of a life of success and enjoyment, seem woven into the fleshy tints of his Venus, and laugh out in the bright faces of Flora and La Bella. And Correggio's sad story;—his lowly toil as a potter, the electric joy with which the conviction came home to him, that he, too, was a painter;—his lonely struggle with obscure poverty;—his almost utter want of appreciation and sympathy;—the limits of a narrow lot pressing upon so fine a soul, and then his rare achievements and bitter death,—worn down by the weight of the very lucre his genius had gained,—can fancy, in her widest range, depict a more affecting picture of the "highest in man's heart struggling vainly against the lowest in man's destiny?" His Magdalene, bowed down yet serene, sad yet beautiful, sinful yet forgiven, is an emblem as lovely as it is true, of the genius and fate of Correggio. Salvator Rosa has written the history of his own life in those wild landscapes he loved so well. One might have inferred his Neapolitan origin. There is that in his pictures that breathes of a southern fancy. We there feel not the chastened tone of a Tuscan mind, not the religious solemnity of a Roman, but rather the half-savage genius of that singular region, where the

lazzaroni sleep on the strand and the fishermen grow swarthy beneath the warmest sky of Italy. The wanderer, the lover of masquerade, he who mingled in the revolt of Massaniello, and roamed amid the gloomy grandeur of the mountains, speaks to us from the canvas of Salvator. Delicacy and affection, taste and sentiment characterize Raphael's paintings. There is in them that refinement of tone, born only of delicate natures, such as this rude world often jars into the insanity of an Ophelia, or bows to the early tomb of a Kirk White. Murillo's style has been characterized as between the Flemish and high Italian, and we are told that, as a man, he combined rare simplicity of manners with the greatest elevation and modesty of soul. Michael Angelo has traced the inflexibility of his nature in the bust of Brutus, his self-possessed virtue in the calm grandeur of his muscular figures. One dreams over them of stern integrity and noble self-dependence.

It is common to talk of the genius of artists as partaking of the "fine phrensy" attributed to that of the poet. The intense excitement which accompanies the process of conception, is, however, comparatively rare, with the votaries of art. They have this advantage over the great thinker and the earnest bard—that much of their labor is mechanical, and calls rather for the exercise of taste than mental effort. There is, indeed, a period in every work when imagination is greatly excited and the whole mind fervidly active, but the painter and sculptor have many intervals of repose, when physical dexterity and imitative skill are alone requisite. And when the hand of the artist has acquired that habitual power which makes it ever obedient to the will, when he is perfectly master of the whole machinery of his art, and is confident of realizing, to a great degree, his every conception, a delightful serenity takes possession

of his mind. Calm trust in his own resources, and the daily happiness of watching the growth of his work, induce a placid and hopeful mood. And when his aim is exalted and his success progressive, there are few happier men. They have an object, the interest of which familiarity cannot lessen nor time dissipate. They follow an occupation delightful and serene. The atmosphere of their vocation is above the "smoke and stir of this dim spot that men call earth." The graceful, the vivid, and the delicate elements of their art, refine their sensibilities and elevate their views. Nature and life minister to them more richly than to those who only "poke about for pence." Hence the masters of the art have generally been remarkable for longevity. Their tranquil occupation, and the happy exercise of their faculties were favorable to life.

It has been said of Michael Angelo's pupils, that they were "nursed in the lap of grandeur." And it may be said of all true artists, that they are buoyed up by that spirit of beauty that is so essential to true happiness. I have ever found in genuine artists, a remarkable simplicity and truthfulness of character. There is a repose about them as of men who commune with something superior, and for whom the frivolous idols of the multitude have no attraction. I have found them usually fond of music, and if not addicted to general literature, ardently attached to a particular poet. They read so constantly the book of nature, that written lore is not so requisite for them. The human face, the waving bough, the flower and the cloud, the fantastic play of the smouldering embers, moonlight on a cornice, and the vast imagery of dreams, are full of teachings for them.

There is a definiteness in the art of sculpture, that renders its language more direct and immediate than that of painting.

Masses of stone were revered as idols, in remote antiquity ; and men soon learned to hew them into rude figures. When architecture, the elder sister of sculpture, had given birth to temples of religion, the statues of deities were their chief ornaments. Images of domestic gods existed as early as the twenty-third century before the Christian era. The early Indian and Hindoo idols, as well as the gloomy sculpture of the Egyptians, evidence how naturally the art sprang from the human mind, even before a refined taste had developed its real dignity. Sculpture was a great element of Grecian culture. In the age of Pericles, it attained perfection. In the square and the temple, on the hill-top and within the private dwelling, the beautiful productions of the chisel met the eye. They addressed every sentiment of devotion and patriotism. They filled the soul with ideals of symmetry and grace, and the traces of their silent eloquence were written in the noble air, the harmonious costume, and the very forms of the ancient Greeks. The era of ideal models and a classic style passed away. In the thirteenth century, the art revived in Italy, and there are preserved some of the noblest specimens of Grecian genius, as well as those to which M. Angelo and his countrymen gave birth. The Apollo looks out upon the sky of Rome, while the Venus "loves in stone" and Niobe bends over her clinging babe in the Florence gallery. Shelley used to say, that he would value a peasant's criticism upon sculpture, as much as that of the most educated man. Form is, indeed, more easily judged than color. There is a certain vagueness in painting, while sculpture is palpable, bold, and clear. There is a severe nobility in the art; its influence is to calm and elevate rather than excite. The Laocoon, Niobe, and Alessandro doloroso are indeed expressions of passion ; but they are striking exceptions. Sculpture soothes the impetu-

ous soul. The heads of the honored dead wear a solemn dignity. The stainless and cold marble breathes a pure repose, stamped with the calm of immortality. In walking through the Vatican by torch-light, we might deem ourselves, without much exercise of fancy, in a world of spirits. The tall white figures looming forward in the gloom, the snowy faces, upon which the flambeaux glare, the winding drapery and the outstretched arm, strike the eye in that artificial light, with a startling look of life. One feels like an intruder into some hall of death, or conclave of the great departed. A good bust is an invaluable memorial; it preserves the features and expression without their temporary hue. There is associated with it the idea of durability and exactitude. Though the most common offspring of sculpture, it is one of the rarest in perfection. Few sculptors can copy nature so faithfully as to give us the very lineaments wholly free from caricature or embellishment. Those who have an eye for the detail of expression, often fail in general effect. To copy the form of the eye, the texture of the hair, every delicate line of the mouth, and yet preserve throughout an air of verisimilitude and that unity of effect which always exists in nature, is no ordinary achievement. The requisite talent must be a native endowment; no mechanical dexterity can ever reach it. "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." This sentiment spontaneously fills the heart in view of the great products of the chisel. We contemplate the Niobe and Apollo, as millions have before us, with growing delight and the most intense admiration. They have come down to us from departed ages, like messengers of love; they assure us, with touching eloquence, that human genius and affection, the aspirations and wants, the sorrow and the enthusiasm of the soul, were ever the same; they invoke us to endure bravely and to cherish the

beautiful and true, as our best heritage. So speak they and so will they speak to unborn generations. In the silent poetry of their expressive forms lives a perennial sentiment. They keep perpetual state, and give the world audience, that it may feel the eternity of genius, and the true dignity of man. It is delightful to believe that sculpture is destined to flourish among us. It is truly the art of a young republic. Let it perpetuate the features of our patriots, and multiply forms of grace and sublimity to elevate the taste and keep alive nobility of sentiment in the people.

LYRIC POETRY.

Poetry is right-royal. It puts the individual for the species, the one above the infinite many.

HAZLITT.

It seems to be generally conceded that the era of dramatic poetry is at an end. Although some of the most recent specimens in this department of literature have commanded a certain degree of public attention and elicited the applause of critics, they evidently, when compared with the old English tragedy, belong to a different school and possess an inferior interest. The object of the writer seems to be not so much to depict inward struggles as to narrate a tale and chronicle a few gems of expression. Modern plays, even of the best kind, seem rather scaffoldings to support a story or convenient threads on which to string the pearls of thought, than "mirrors of nature" or profound pictures of life and humanity. The King of Sparta, when he saw a machine for casting stones, called it "the grave of valor;" so the refined machinery of our social state may be regarded as the sepulchre of that freshness of feeling, that heartiness of self-development, that frank, adventurous, and bold character, which marks the dawn of civilization, and is the fertile source of a powerful literature. The surface of society in this age is too level to be picturesque. The scope for mental and physical enterprise is too constrained for striking display. The motives now at work are for the most of a personal and contracted nature. The element of heroism finds its chief activity in endurance. Life, indeed, is the same scene of struggle,

exposure, and excitement, but its energies are alive chiefly to the moral experience of each man, instead of being exhibited, as in the chivalric ages, upon the broad arena of the world and before the gaze of multitudes.

The diffusion of knowledge seems to have produced the same effect upon epic poetry that social refinement has upon dramatic. Men are no longer divided into the grossly ignorant and greatly learned. There is an immense intermediate class, whose vocations prevent extensive erudition, but whose minds are awakened by popular education, and improved by intercourse with superior intelligence and occasional reading. Hence scholarship is not the rare distinction it once was, nor literary enjoyment the exclusive privilege of a few. These, among other considerations, give weight to the remark of a distinguished writer, that the "era of universal individualities is past." Nor is this the only reason for the decline of epic poetry. Literature is so common a luxury that the age has grown fastidious. The moralist is expected to allure men to virtue by his beautiful rhetoric. Philosophy must be illustrated by charming metaphors or captivating fiction; and history, casting aside the tedious garb of formal narrative, is required to assume a scenic costume, and teem with the connected interest of a fascinating tale. The poet, too, must distil his roses and touch his harp at graceful intervals. His auditors will grow weary over an elaborate production, unless it is wrought out with rare felicity or boasts some novel attraction. The nice appetite of a modern reader is soon sated. However great his poetical taste, fifty pages of blank verse are too formidable to be adventured, and the mere sight of half a dozen cantos of heroics provokes a yawn. The times are too busy, outward activity too absorbing, and the calls upon attention too unremitted, to permit

us to engage in those long and wide-sweeping literary forays in which the Germans are so fond of indulging. Accordingly, poetry has taken a form more favorable to its circulation. It has cast off its ponderous armor and donned a more courtly dress. It seeks to concentrate its spirit in diminutive and graceful forms. It woos the magic process recorded in Arabian tales, and has discovered the art of contracting its vital elements into minute shapes, and soaring on gossamer wings. Lyric poetry is thus in vogue from the peculiar circumstances of the age. It obtains not less on account of the increased personality, if I may so speak, of a man himself. A series of external events, however well described in stately verse, are now deemed less entertaining than a single incident or emotion freshly portrayed from a living mind. The individual is thought more interesting than the mass. A single encounter attracts more spectators than a promiscuous battle. We have had leisure, in our unadventurous times, to discover the finer points of interest in the great picture of human life. Christian civilization has worked a daguerreotype process upon the common and universal light of mind. It is at length revealed that a profound interest attaches to the humblest of our fellow-creatures. The scions of aristocracy can sit for hours upon their splendid ottomans, amid mirrors, vases, and all the paraphernalia of fashionable luxury, conning with tearful eyes the memoirs of a parish boy; and the accomplished daughters of a pampered nobility quote the homely expressions of Jeannie Deans instead of the elegant sentimentality of Metastasio. Sensibility to the universal and quiet facts of human nature, renders the poetic records of an individual's experience singularly attractive. The truth is now acknowledged, that a poet may be personal without being egotistical. The regret, the love, or the hopes poured forth in

his song, are indeed tinged with his idiosyncrasy, but they are essentially the same as sway the bosoms of his race, and even what is peculiar in their phases doubtless finds its reflection. Lyric poetry survives the drama and the epic, because it is indissolubly entwined with individual destiny. The latter may be buried in the grave of nationality, but the former has a permanent home in the bosom of man. It is common to lament this revolution in poetic taste and practice. It is frequently cited as an evidence of mental degeneracy. There was adequate cause for this at those periods when the lyric was more artificial: at the early part of the seventeenth century, for instance, when verses were written only to bestow degrading adulation or embody extravagant similes, that profanely assumed to express love, and overflowed with false wit, the *concetti* of the Italians, and a thousand tinsel absurdities. But the objection does not hold when applied to the legitimate lyric, and especially to those of a period when the love of freedom and humanizing sentiment abound, and find their sweetest expression in song. Poetry is too earnest, now, to be devoted to the minute portraiture of a metaphysical passion, whose fanciful display proves its hollowness. The lyrists of our day have too often struck the deep chords of the heart, to expect effects from cold associations of imagery or forced tricks of versification.

There is abundant cause to rejoice in the popularity of lyric poetry. It has one advantage over the more pretending branches of the art, which cannot but endear it to the lover of his race. It is more penetrating and diffusive. Let not the philosopher frown upon the lesser vehicles of thought and sentiment. They reach many bosoms that would otherwise remain wholly unblessed by their genial influence. No error has more impeded human progress than the cumbrous arrangements of

its mistaken friends. In this regard, nature teaches a subtle wisdom. The gentle beams of the serene moon sway the mighty sea, and the noiseless dew freshens the whole world of vegetation. It has been said that tracts, in earlier times, disseminated more knowledge than volumes, and we all know that periodical literature has proved a mightier agent, in the world of opinion, than learned quartos. The romance of history has threaded a wider range in the shape of legendary ballads, than in that of elaborate chronicles; and lyric poetry has wafted the seeds of truth and the flowers of fancy to many a desert nook of the earth. While the men-of-war of literature—the Iliads and Divine Comedies—have swept proudly before the breeze of Time, on the broad ocean of life, lyrical compositions, when born of the true heart and the fervent imagination, have glided, in meek beauty, into the lonely bays, or borne their freights of love to the unvisited shores of some solitary isle. Lyrics are like sacred sparks of Promethean fire, floating down to light up a happy glow in the shadowy soul. They are as Spring blossoms gently dropping from the tree of knowledge, to cheer the passing pilgrim; stray Peris from the bowers of Paradise, creeping playfully into the chambers of the heart; single strains of rare music, waking long echoes; wild flowers, blooming by the wayside and in the stony interstices of life's rude pathway. They catch the eye of the toiler, in the corner of a newspaper, and impart a momentary but sweet refreshment. They greet the ear of pleasure's votary, in the gay saloon, borne on the wings of some insinuating melody, and the impression lingers with a healing charm, to soothe the wounds of vanity and soften the iciness of pride. In hours of listlessness or depression, they come self-invoked, from the caves of memory, bringing repose and freshness in their perennial bloom. "A wave of

genuine Helicon," says Lamb, "is your only Spa for these hypochondriacs." As the falcon launched trustingly heavenward is lost to view, the course of the higher poetry often soars beyond the ken of the multitude; and as the humbler birds carol blithely round our dwellings, so the meeker lays of the muse linger tunefully about the heart.

The genuine lyric is the offspring of sincere feeling, the expression of poetic experience. Completeness and unity of design are essential to its perfection; for "song is but the eloquence of truth." It is a common error to wonder at the rarity of poetic production where the gift is known to be possessed. But lyrical inspiration is not arbitrary; it is spontaneous. In its very essence it is occasional. A true poet of this order must be excited by some circumstance of interest, or some sentiment of power. The Lake poets have desecrated their fame by writing artificially. Where their themes have been true, their interest real, the result is always effective.

The lyric should illustrate a single great truth, or exemplify one overpowering sentiment. When descriptive, it is best adapted to portray isolated events or celebrate individual objects. A battle, a favorite tree, a romantic incident of any sort is thus succinctly sung, and around such a nucleus gather the crystallizations of thought in brilliant harmony. The lover can thus breathe his daring hopes or insinuate his affectionate reproaches; the bereaved twine an elegiac garland around the tomb where his heart lies buried; the devotional utter their trust and gratitude; and the soul touched with the glories of creation, find a medium to whisper its orisons. The capabilities of the lyric are as various as the events of life. Better moments are therein embalmed. Cheering truths are thus familiarly enshrined; consecrated tapers lighted before the altars of the

wayside. Lyric poetry is remarkably adapted to our own busy and unimaginative country. Who can estimate the germs of virtue or the refinement of sentiment induced among our people, by the lyrics which the gazettes and school-books of the country have borne to the minds of millions? Recited by the child at the fireside, chanted by the maiden at the piano, quoted by the divine and the lecturer, they have disseminated an atmosphere of taste, and awakened the springs of genius.

Let those who are disposed to question our estimate of lyric poetry as a means of culture and a herald of fame, recollect the popularity of Beranger's songs in France, the acknowledged influence of Goethe's and Schiller's lyrics in Germany, and the ardor with which the Modern Italians cite Filicaja and Monti. Or, rather, let the objector scan his own mental history, and glance at the actual renown of the bards of our own language. Who reads any of Dryden's ambitious attempts in literature; yet what schoolboy is not familiar with his ode on St. Cecilia's day? How few comprehend the philosophical system of Coleridge compared with those who have been exalted by his Hymn in the Vale of Chamouni, and thrilled under the touching sweetness of his Genevieve! Cowper's long poem, to no inconsiderable class of readers, is indeed a task; but what heart can fail to melt at the tenderness of his Lines to his Mother's Picture? Korner's few songs are cherished memorials of his bravery and death, in a thousand hearts. "Not a drum was heard, nor a funeral note," we are told, when the gallant Sir John Moore was interred on a foreign soil, but the Monody of Wolfe has sent down the stream of time a picture of that lonely sepulture, which will be felt when the solemn pageantry of Napoleon's funeral has passed into oblivion. Gray's scholarship is as a forgotten tale, but his Elegy has floated, upon solemn wings,

through the wasting atmosphere of years. The Cotter's Saturday Night has hallowed Scotland to the imaginative, more than the fame of all her battles; and Heber's Missionary Hymn has done more for the cause than the pleadings of a hundred preachers. The poetry of the affections has been scattered from the lyre of Mrs. Hemans, around the hearthstones and graves of two mighty nations; and the songs of Moore enliven the feast and speak for the lover, in the sequestered village, amid the halls of pleasure, and on the lonely sea. The waterfowl, thanks to an American lyrist, as he skims the hazy air of twilight, now bears a consoling truth to the hearts of mortals; and the hero of modern Greece has been canonized, as a saint of freedom, by a bard of the New World.

Domestic life has gradually become the great scene of human experience. Ambition aims at social distinction, and has lost much of its reverence for martial honor. The same order of spirits that would have sacrificed everything for knightly preferment, are now content with bearing off the honors of a *conversazione.* Men whose earnest natures would have made them, in the fourteenth century, military leaders or bold navigators, now emulate the serener fame of diplomacy or letters, and "do their spriting gently." Existence has grown more and more concentrated; effort has assumed an individual aspect; comfort is estimated beyond glory, and Christianity has made men repose, with a new confidence, on the meeker virtues; and thus the bold and striking features of humanity, upon which dramatic genius fixes its regard, and to which the sympathies of ruder communities are strongly responsive, have, little by little, assumed a softer tone, and a more delicate contour. The muscular limbs of Michael Angelo's statues strike our gaze with a startling effect. The old towers of the middle ages

look mysterious in their mouldering might. The earnest eyes of the old female portraits, and the heavy armor of the warriors, wear a most formidable appearance; and so the impassioned adjurations of jealousy, the daring wickedness of ambition, the extravagant fantasies of love, as drawn by Shakspeare, come upon us like the mighty voices of a higher humanity, the half-forgotten tones of a more earnest race.

SOCIAL LIFE.

"'Tis an old usage, known to all
In the great world, to make ourselves small."
GOETHE.

THE ladies of our metropolis lately manifested a singular want of *esprit du corps* in countenancing, by their fair presence, the opening of a new and splendid Club-house. The spirit of trade interposes a sufficient barrier already to social progress and enjoyment. In London the club system has withdrawn the cleverest men from the drawing-rooms; and if foreigners so justly wonder at the superiority of female culture in America, and our travelled countrywomen complain of the emptiness of the professed beaux, and the stolidity of the business men they encounter, they should frown upon, instead of encouraging all projects which tend to make the social pleasures of the other sex exclusive. It was, then quite inconsiderate in them to greet, with their smiles, the elegant rooms of the Racket Club; and it is equally so perhaps for the sincere aspirants for a better order of social life, to lend their plaudits to amateur concerts—another recent invention of fashionable vanity—to escape from the inane routine of trivial or stupid intercourse. Both these signs of the times make evident the deficiencies of social life, and eloquently suggest its true claims, to which we propose to devote a few pages in the hope of placing them before the minds of our readers in what we believe a just point of view.

Some of the pictures we have of those lesser but permanent circles of French society—where a gifted woman makes her

house a nucleus for the periodical gathering of the same friends, —are a delightful contrast to merely fashionable assemblies. It would appear that the very familiarity with each other's modes of thought serves but to rivet the bond, for where there is intellectual vigor and sincerity of feeling, habit only strengthens attachment. At such reunions many of the philosophers of the last century spent their evenings for successive years; and their recreative effect seems never to have diminished until death interrupted the enlightened pastime. A beautiful simplicity is also evinced in some of the social habits of Germany, where learning, talent, or worth, however obscurely lodged, easily calls around it kindred elements. Often the wealthiest citizen is found domesticated in the humble apartment of a poor *savan* or laborious author. The unaffected interchange of thought, a perfectly artless manner, and the sustained interest of genuine conversation, throw over these occasions an enduring spell. They illustrate the sufficiency of mental resources and truth of character as a basis of association, and their freedom from pedantry and ostentation, is refreshing to all who have grown weary of elegant conventionalism and material expedients.

The *conversazione* of the Italians boasts, at least, the advantages of good-nature and independence. Those large and scantily furnished halls opening upon a cool balcony overlooking a garden, and deliciously adapted for *tête-à-têtes* or reveries—are paced without any feeling of restraint, and yet with a pleasant consciousness of society. The piano, the card-table, or an ottoman, invite each guest to consult his mood; and the tray of ices in the corner, indicates how little superfluity of means has to do with real hospitality in the estimation of that sympathetic people. There is a most agreeable facility, too, in opera visit-

ing. The shadowy boxes wherein an acquaintance drops to exchange a greeting, or an intimate lingers to hear a duo, at once break the ice of ceremony. In fact, as far as general intercourse is concerned, the art social resolves itself into eschewing as much as possible all machinery, the abridgment of etiquette—in short, the opening of a convenient arena whereon the touch and go process—the glance, the inquiry, and the salutation may be enacted with as little expense of time and form as may be. All beyond this is but the exaction of vanity.

Literary society, unless modified by knowledge of the world or generous feeling, is far from desirable. Professed authors who over-estimate their vocation, are too full of themselves to be agreeable companions. The demands of their egotism are inveterate. They seem to be incapable of that *abandon* which is the requisite condition of social pleasure; and bent upon winning a tribute of admiration, or some hint which they can turn to the account of pen-craft, there is seldom in their company any of the delightful unconsciousness which harmonizes a circle. Those, on the contrary, to whom literature has been only one of many elements of experience, derive from it a grace and aptitude which adorn and enliven social life. It is only the intense and narrow school of literary people of which we must beware, for it is far more refreshing to consort with an honest farmer, or a whole-souled mariner, who talks intelligently of crops or with zeal of "hair-breadth 'scapes," than with one who cannot lose, for a moment, the sense of authorship in the instinct of manhood or the grace of womanhood. Whoever has set his whole heart upon book-making had better be sought in his works, for it is only the lees of his cup of life which he offers, in person, to the warm lips of his fellows.

The attractive reminiscences traced with such zeal by men

like Hazlitt and Hood; the discussions journalized by Madame D'Arblay; the minute details of Johnsonian argument; and the enthusiastic record of Fuseli's criticism, Mackintosh's acumen, Lamb's wit, and Coleridge's eloquence, do not invalidate this position. There was a pregnant reality either in the individuals, or the subjects thus consecrated. Authors of such a rank have souls as well as talent. They are capable of losing themselves in their themes, and were too much in earnest for hollow display. Their convivialities were inspired by heartiness, and their play of mind was frank and spontaneous. A late London epistle says:—"That which this great metropolis *most* wants—its greatest, its almost only intellectual want—is an easy resort of the lettered and the gifted. No public institutions will do. One sickens at the thought. To establish one's self by privilege among lions, to go anywhere expressly to be wise, is enough to put a super crust of pride and indifference on any honest nature. All good society must be private. Holland House has ceased to be the centre of all that refines, interests, and elevates society. We have now no centre; our commonwealth of letters is turned up-side down. It wants a protector."

The artistic organization is rich in fine social qualities. Art is a magnet that places in true relations the most sensitive and intelligent beings. It is a most available medium whereby to escape the daily burden of necessity, and bring into speedy action the latent humanities.

Society is the offspring of leisure; and to acquire this, forms the only rational motive for accumulating wealth, notwithstanding the cant that prevails on the subject of labor. Statistics prove that longevity is promoted by a life of ease; and the English gentry are a living proof of the animal perfection attained by freedom from manual toil and harassing care. The

brain consists of a variety of organs, and both physical and mental health is secured through their activity. The unceasing exercise of a part of this delicate organ—whether in the region of the passions or the intellect, results in a morbid condition. Sensation is blunted and emotion quelled by toil. We are apt to confound mere indolence with gentle excitement; yet wisdom and the exalted pleasures born of a sensitive temperament originated in the East; and the very alliance which nature indicates between enjoyment and exercise, is, in itself, a powerful argument in favor of comparative repose. Character is but an equilibrium of the faculties—a latent and self-adjusting force; love is the tranquillity arising from gratified sympathies, and the highest forms of thought are evolved from the unconscious workings of a mind freely and genially productive. We do not associate painful throes with the brilliant sallies of wit, or the earnest flow of ideas that come forth in conversation. As the seed germinates, or the buds open, as the cloud-founts gather, or the breeze swells, so expands the inward life of humanity; and there is something essentially factitious in the bustle of affairs, and the intensity of application, growing out of illegitimate processes, or formal abstraction. Around all perfect things there lingers a voluptuous atmosphere. A winsome facility of expression is one of the vital charms of genuine literature—as if it were an ebullition—a growth—a spontaneous utterance—the offspring of honest impulse. Study is properly attention, and this, to be effective, is voluntary. Circumstances or accident may favor it, but it must originate in instinct. The sensibility of our frames, the alacrity of our observation, and the warmth of our feelings, are best realized, not by sustained and dogged industry, but by freedom, serenity, and retirement. Thus are kept alive the powers that become exhausted or inflexi-

ble when whipped into service. The eye that keeps perpetual vigil over self-interest, soon fails to be a mirror of the soul; the cheek bronzed in strife for gain, cannot kindle with the evanescent but ravishing glow; the brow habitually knit in anxiety "about many things," boasts no glorious serenity; the hand toughened at the plough or the work-bench, is no longer a magnetic instrument. The intricate tissue of nerves which bear from heart and brain electric impressions, gradually refuse to mould the will as muscularity develops. All that is profound in expression and touching in consciousness, all that unites human intelligence with outward beauty—the truth of being and the essence of life depend upon preserving the individual susceptibilities of our nature.

To beings thus constituted is it not singularly unwise to be guided by no principles in social life? As a simple question of culture, the social atmosphere with which we surround ourselves is one of great significance, but viewed in reference to peace of mind, sincerity and happiness, it is difficult to limit its agency. There is, in this country, a random, gregarious habit of intercourse, which continually trenches upon self-respect, and lowers the tone of manners; and this is not exclusively owing to our political institutions, although they undoubtedly contribute to it. Nothing seems so much dreaded as the reputation of eccentricity or exclusiveness; and the reproach of selfishness is thoughtlessly annexed to all who thus differ from the multitude. The truth is, however, that such are usually the best adapted to any social exigency. They constitute a reserve guard who freshly enter the breach where more popular individuals falter. In some peculiar ministry they are found eminently serviceable, and make up in the quality of their communion for its infrequency. The instant any true and penetrating relation marks

the life of any of these social prodigals, there springs up a poignant regret that so much earnestness of feeling had been previously wasted, and that there remains so little of the original power of concentration to nourish the faith which has, at length, taken possession of the heart. And this is no selfish consideration, for it is then felt that, clad in the sustaining armor of such relations, we are infinitely better able to endure for ourselves and minister to others. Those whose sympathies are for ever drained, and blest with no fountain whence to replenish, are thwarted not only of their legitimate enjoyment, but of their just usefulness. "My poor Zimmerman, who now will understand thee?" was the affecting inquiry which the wife of the author of "Solitude," addressed him on her death-bed. How much is contained in the question! It suggests years of patient affection—a tolerance of faults based on an intimate acquaintance with virtues—a loving insight into the springs of character, which made the casual aspect at the surface of no account. To be understood—this also is a necessity growing partly out of the conviction that nearly all our so-called social life is artificial and meaningless.

Society, perhaps, more than any other element of life, gives scope to the extremes of fact and fiction, of caprice and devotion, of frankness and feigning. On the one hand it is a most complete masquerade, and on the other a profound reality. To the majority of persons it affords singular pleasure to escape from themselves by experimenting on others—to enact for a while a degree of refinement, wisdom, knowledge of the world, and even romance, quite foreign to their natures. In women of spirit, such a pastime is quite delightful; it exercises their ingenuity, gratifies their love of admiration, and yields sometimes the most charming self-delusion. It is their arena and diplomacy,—a

kind of imaginary kingdom, wherein to forget the restrictions or the monotony of their career. It is social life in its conventional and dramatic aspect; but the reaction to the genuine is often proportionally earnest; for we are very children in those relations voluntarily assumed from the inspiration of genial contact.

The greatest of luxuries is to throw aside the disguise and come down from the watch-tower. Like native air to the returning exile is the tested and satisfying presence of those, who to us are, in truth, society; and there is no desolation like outgrowing such genuine human ties. What pathos in Elia's regret at the death of a friend of his youth—"There is no one left to call me Charley now!"

Thus the very term—social life, has two quite diverse associations; the one connected with kid gloves, bon-bon mottoes, and quadrilles—the other with "division of the records of the mind." All the world over, the former phase offers the same temporary interest—pipes and coffee, fans and eye-glasses, japonicas and veils—being but varying external symbols of an identical ceremony. In one sense these necessary arrangements whereby human beings come together, may be called social, although the mechanism usually overlays the soul of promiscuous intercourse. It is, however, the more important definition of social life, that which enlists our minds and feelings, and modifies our very natures, that we now propose to discuss.

It is remarkable that while, in art and literature, gifted minds continually propose and emulate high and peculiar standards, so few apply a like principle to social life. Political economists and moral reformers have, indeed, advocated certain organizations which they believe will equalize property and diminish vice; but such aims are comparatively material and philanthro-

pic. Individual genius seldom carries a sense of beauty and a reverence for truth into its personal relations. Yet, if furniture or costume give adequate hints of character, how much more significant is social life!

The almost exclusive sense of refined enjoyment which Dr. Johnson derived from social life, was manifested by the revulsion of his morbid temperament from the serene pleasures of nature, and his keen relish of tea-parties, or an agreeably freighted post-chaise. He seems to have had an almost sublime consciousness of the vast social resources of London; such as drew tears from a more delicate observer in the motley Strand, as he mused on "its fulness of life;" and with truly characteristic emphasis, when Boswell in reply to his query at Greenwich—"Is not this very fine?" said—"not equal to Fleet Street"—came forth his oracular, "Sir, you are right."

There is, indeed, such a world of beauty and moral interest in social life, when we consider its infinite possibilities, that one endowed with the requisite qualifications, would be justified in making it the primary object of existence. The establishment of monastic institutions seems a negative proof of the vast importance it assumes in the view of those most keenly alive to its influence. The fact proves that there is a class of beings whose earthly happiness is involved in its relations, whose social instincts must be met, or the world abandoned. We find that the most gifted beings enthusiastically seek and cherish an ideal in this regard. The very idiosyncrasies of our nature yield us profit only as they are recognised. Our choicest abilities are as nothing until they find scope among our kind. We value ourselves chiefly for the good we effect; and misanthropy itself is a tribute to our race. Autobiographies, memoirs, and even history display no more striking fact than this—that the epochs of indi-

vidual life are the periods when truth is made personal by the advent of some character. Bell, in his Philosophy of Expression, asserts that there is no such thing as enjoyment of abstract nature, but that we people every scene from the imagination or the heart; and that this is the secret of their enchantment. Every city and hamlet is a testimony to the prevalence and the reality of these sympathies. There is no such thing as self-subsistence as regards human beings. Pride, asceticism, isolation, only confirm our theory. They are the reaction which evidence the necessity—the extreme which demonstrates an antagonism. The motives of action which have their birth in our relations with others, are the most potent and lasting to which we are subject. Public opinion is the greatest engine in the machinery of our age,—how to control it, the science of modern diplomacy; personal influence, the spell which ambition seeks; and sympathy, the boon for which the civilized malcontent for ever sighs.

A great writer of the present age, confessed to a friend, towards the end of his career, that he sometimes doubted whether he had not sacrificed his legitimate mission by neglecting social for professional activity. He deemed the influence of the press too vague for entirely satisfactory results, and perceived that men of inferior powers, but quicker and wider sympathies, effected more in direct intercourse as regards individuals, than either authorship or oratory. This is a striking evidence of the value of personal associations. Ideas, it would seem, do not readily assimilate with character unless they are magnetically conveyed. We quote an author with deference, perhaps, but a friend's maxims have a sweet impressiveness. The voice, the eye, the manner, recollections of long-continued kindness, and the sanction of natural affinity, make opinions thus derived, more

vital and interesting. The Greek system of oral instruction—those philosophic walks beneath the temple porch, the Oriental custom of story-telling in the open air; and even the holy records of the Christian faith suggest how appealing to human sympathies is the colloquial method of imparting truth, and how naturally the social instinct lends itself to offices of faith and wisdom.

Courtesy is one thing and society quite another. We instinctively regard those who abound in the former quality as possessing no rare capability for the latter. In fact, the courtier is not extinct, notwithstanding the march of democracy. He forms a species by itself, and may be discovered in all societies; perhaps he is a necessary part of their machinery, like a lion or an usher. Phrenologically speaking, he is an incarnation of approbativeness, "a martyr to respect of persons;" and if life offered no higher scene than a ball-room, or owned no deeper want than a compliment, might prove an adequate representative of the social principle.

"Again and again," says Eothen, "you meet turbans and faces of men, but they have nothing for you—no welcome, no wonder, no wrath, no scorn; they look upon you as upon a December's fall of snow—as an unaccountable, uncomfortable work of God, that may have been sent for some good purpose, to be revealed hereafter." There is a certain sincerity in this objective view of our fellow-creatures, which is more respectable than the hypocritical intercourse of what is called society. It argues, at all events, a delightful absence of vanity—of that restless craving for notice and mean ambition to impress every one, which is so incompatible with integrity of feeling.

For it is derogatory to the subject to limit its ends to agreeability. Wit has been rightly defined as the eloquence of indif-

ference. "When was a god," asks Carlyle, "found agreeable to everybody?" Those who are conscious of no higher abilities, or more real wants, are, of course, justified in devoting themselves to superficial generalities, and certainly their vocation is quite laudable in its way. We only contend that the obligation is not universal; that in society, as in active life, there is allotted to each a special office; and the social adventurers, when thrown back on their consciousness, after recklessly diffusing themselves, usually learn, with cordial Jean Paul, to exclaim sadly, "Ah! what seeds for a paradise I bore in my heart, of which birds of prey have robbed me!"

It is related of Gainsborough that he used to buy the violin, hautboy, or flute of great performers, under the idea that the spell which had entranced him, lay in the instrument; and he did not conceal the bitterness of his disappointment at the discovery that it was in the man. Few symbols more perfectly illustrate the mutual action and re-action of human beings than music; and it is a capital error to suppose that the deepest notes of any mind, or the secret melody of any heart, can be indiscriminately elicited. Like the credulous artist, we are apt to imagine that the graces of individual character may be drawn forth at random, and perversely shut our eyes to the great fact that insight and sympathy are essential on the one part, as well as fine endowments on the other.

As perception matures, and feeling grows clear and profound, we begin to regard society on a broad scale, as "a gallery of pictures;" which sated curiosity would not prompt us to inspect, were there not some private motive or vague hope to rouse its slumber. Of the mass whom we encounter at assemblies, how few stand forth with any relief to the mind's eye, yield a thought or stir an emotion which memory can treasure! They are like

the passionless mediocrities, whom Virgil's stern guide refused to discuss:

"Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda e passa."

Thus social life gradually becomes a formula, until thirsting for reality, we leave its ostentatious manifestations, and individualize our intercourse.

It has been said that self-respect is the gate of heaven, and the most cursory observation shows that a degree of reserve adds vastly to the latent force of character. The facility with which persons of easy disposition enter into intimacies, is significant of narrow resources and limited feeling. Pride when justly regulated is a real virtue, and absolutely necessary in a world so exposed to brazen intrusiveness and thoughtless curiosity. Sidney and Raleigh were the most accessible of men, and at the same time benign to their inferiors; yet a dignity, felt rather than seen, inspired towards them a wholesome reverence. We cannot but love aspiration as an element of social feeling—not the petty ambition that aims only at rank, but the enthusiasm which ardently craves fellowship with the aristocracy of nature. Life offers no richer boon or more desirable discipline. "We encourage one another in mediocrity," wisely objected a quaint writer to a particular association; and it is a spurious philanthropy that induces many kindly people to give their time to inferior companions, between whom and themselves there is no genuine assimilation, and to reach whose level they must laboriously decline from their own range. The duties of benevolence are sacred, and gross inhumanity alone will scorn the humblest offices of charity; but social ministries, when not prescribed by actual duty, should be exercised with some discrimination. Gossip is a cheap entertainment which any tongue can furnish;

and where this alone is required, let it not be doled out by those gifted to exercise a more noble almony. To cheer, or solace, or quicken another spirit, hath in it a sacred meaning, and worthily to realize this, demands a concentration of purpose, and freshness of sentiment, which it is as inexcusable to waste on a profitless object, as to pour the water for which flowers and herbs are thirsting, upon the barren sand. Not from mere fastidiousness of taste, intent upon its own gratification—nor from the fear of compromising position, do we advocate discrimination in social life, but on the broad ground of truth and utility; and that, in the retrospect, we may be conscious of more definite and satisfactory memories than poor Shallow boasted, when he exclaimed, "O the mad days that I have spent! and to see how many of my old acquaintances are dead!"

Half the evils attendant on social life arise from moral cowardice. To be sincere requires heroism, and few are courageous enough to act out a change of sentiment or practically assert their independence. It may be but an evidence of human frailty, and yet it is true that there is such a thing as outgrowing social relations. Circumstances, the immediate stage of thought or feeling at which we have arrived, nay, a momentary humor, may be the only actual bond of companionship. How absurd, when such is the case, perversely to foster what by its own law should expire!

"As there are some flowers," says Landor, "which you should smell but slightly to extract all that is pleasant in them, and which if you do otherwise, emit what is unpleasant or noxious, so there are some men with whom a slight acquaintance is quite sufficient to draw out all that is agreeable; a more intimate one would be unsatisfactory and unsafe."

Yet a multiplicity of such *hortus siccus* relations are passively

dawdled over, by thousands, from an ignoble fear of appearing inconsistent, or an inability to bear the accusation of caprice. It is very common to attach this latter reproach to every instance of change of associates; but the motive and reason of the process should first be ascertained. Not unfrequently, the noble answer, in one of the old dramas, may be justly given:—

> "————My mind's the same
> It ever was to you. Where I find worth
> I love the keeper till he let it go,
> And then I follow it."

Whatever is genuine in social relations, endures despite of time, error, absence, and destiny; and that which has no inherent vitality had better die at once. A great poet has truly declared that constancy is no virtue, but a fact. The idea of sustaining the ties of social life by an effort of the will is perfectly irrational. They may be cherished, protected, and held sacred, but being essentially spontaneous, it is quite impossible to enforce their continuance. Are there no enduring principles, then, it may be asked, in social life? Is it quite impossible herein to "make assurance doubly sure, and take a bond of fate?"

We believe in the existenee of fixed laws regulating human relations—laws as immutable as those of natural science. As the planets have orbits, we are bound to each other by indestructible affinities; and to recognise and obey these, is the only true philosophy of social life. They are interfered with by arbitrary conventionalities, by interest, by ambition, habit, and countless other distracting influences, which mankind are too weak to resist; and hence the beauty of social life is revealed but in glimpses, and its far-reaching agency seldom comes home

to the imagination or the heart. Having found the genial, it remains to satisfy ourselves that it is allied to reliable qualities.

> "Those have most power to hurt us that we love;
> We lay our sleeping lives within their arms."

A comparatively brief experience brings the conviction, that the most precious trait in social life, is that which inspires faith. There is nothing more wearisome than a vigilant intercourse—a constant wariness and distrust either of the honor or discretion of a companion. It checks and turns away the natural current of feeling, creates hesitancy in the utterance of opinion, and never permits us to lose ourselves in candid expression. A decided vein of individuality, something which implies character, alone induces respect, without which, according to the old proverb, familiarity necessarily breeds contempt. "I love," says Montaigne, "a friendship that flatters itself in the sharpness and vigor of its communications." Mutual confidence is the seal of all desirable communion; and if to sympathetic are added intelligent characteristics, in the breadth and quickness of which, the most liberal thought and the most spontaneous humor find instant recognition, there is combined the essentials of satisfactory intercourse, if based on the native affinities which are the living principle of our social existence.

COSTUME.

"The apparel oft denotes the man."

HAMLET.

IT is to be regretted we are so limited in costume. No word is more prevalent than *becoming*, and no idea more commonly violated. As regards the dress of our own sex, I do not remember to have met a single exception to the feeling of its almost entire deficiency, both in elegance and adaptation. The vest, cloak, and *robe de chambre*, are the only articles of male toilet that have any pretension to grace. It would be curious to ascertain the original idea and psychological history of the hat. There never was an item of dress invented so significant of utilitarianism. Its formal and inflexible shape, dark hue and hopeless individuality, convey the notion of selfishness and citizenship. A hat is essentially anti-chivalric. It is useful to wave and hurrah with, and to collect votes and money, and abridge the play of hearts of courtesy—for a touch upon its rim is deemed abundant salutation by the English and Americans. There is something very indicative of character in a hat and the manner in which it is worn. A demurely-shaped crown and flat brim give an air of respectability to many a "landless resolute," while a slight lateral inclination imparts a look of dare-devilism even to a clerical physiognomy. Broad brims seem to chasten the temper, or, at least, its expression—as in the Quakers; and very narrow, curling ones, denote pertness. Hatters should have a peculiarly nice sense of the appropriate.

Non-conformity may, with singular justice, be indulged in relation to this particular of costume. It is quite absurd to wear hats of one model, unless the dissimilarities of faces and heads can be abolished.

I remember two anecdotes of hats, which, each in its way, may serve to redeem the article in the imagination of its enemies. Some years ago, a famous duellist lived at the principal hotel of Hamburg. He was for ever seeking quarrels, and always shot his man. One successful method of giving offence was to come in late to dinner, and abuse some unlucky stranger, who had inadvertently appropriated his chair. A gentleman newly-arrived was warned of this as he was about to seat himself in the bully's place. He calmly heard his feats of blood described, and glancing at the chair, inquired—"Is this his hat, too?" On being answered affirmatively, he deliberately threw it in the fire, and appropriating the seat, went coolly on with his dinner. When the hero arrived and listened to the facts, he quietly withdrew, thinking such an adversary must have skill equal to his daring. The other incident refers to an old man remarkable for his integrity, who wore the same hat so long that it became a proverb with his neighbors. At last he was seen, one Saturday afternoon, going home with a new hat on. The next morning all the fences in the vicinity bore the inscription—"John Green has got a new hat!" A compassionate friend went to the old man and informed him of this ridicule, offering to have the inscriptions erased ere he made his appearance again in the streets. "No," said the honest economist; "go and add—'*And it is paid for!*'"

Byron's friend, Matthews, used to pay a shilling at an eating-house in London, for the privilege of dining with his hat on—a mania none but an Englishman could have experienced.

The discomforts which hats occasion tall people are neither few nor small. Such as are obliged to frequent omnibuses and cabins, have especial need of a serene temper. There are so many fabrics of which caps may be made, and such a scope for taste in their design, that I marvel that good sense, to say nothing of a love of beauty, has not long ago introduced them to general use. Ophelia's minute description of Hamlet's wild bearing reaches its climax thus—"his doublet all unbraced, *his hat upon his head*," but the sentiment attached to hats is incidental, not intrinsic. They serve as effective back-grounds for symbolizing liberty in the form of a cockade; and poor Benedick's smooth beaver evinced that his sturdy affections were conquered at last. "If he be not in love with some woman," says Claudio, "there is no believing in old signs:—*he brushes his hat o'mornings.*"

The flowing drawers of the Turks are eminently worthy of imitation by civilized society; and why should we not substitute the *blouse* for the frock-coat? Grace, comfort, and economy, would all be promoted by the change; and the same garment of finer texture or richer hue—to say nothing of a little tasteful embroidery by fair hands—might become an excellent costume for special and festive occasions. Worldly-wise Polonius says, "the apparel oft denotes the man." Alas, since the frank days of Queen Bess, how has the tyranny of public opinion tended to make this maxim obsolete! Costume, I suppose, will only be reformed, like diet and the Indians, by association. Phalanxes of innovators will turn out in new garments and keep up each other's moral courage in wearing a moustache or ruffles, by example. Independence in this regard is always deemed coxcombical, especially in this republic. Beggars, chimney-sweepers, and now and then, an oriental figure in our sea-ports,

alone give any vivacious coloring to the streets. A fine winter American day, however, exhibits a Dahlia-variety of hues when ladies are at their noon promenade. Abroad, it would seem as if ingenious people sought indemnity for political restrictions by dressing to please themselves. Art continually reproaches us on this subject. Why are Vandyke's unknown portraits so attractive? Simply because they are picturesque. The most expressive face loses much of its essential meaning when transferred to canvas, on account of the stock and dress-coat on which it is mounted. The limited privileges of *man*kind on the score of raiment, are but typical of the monotony which society, in this age, seems to have entailed on life. It is in good taste that black is the accredited color, for doubtless it is the best fitted to subdue all inequalities of form, and is associated with the idea of simplicity and dignity—qualities most appropriate to manhood. It is rather in the style than the hue of our garments that we require change; and this not to minister to courtly fopperies, but for the sake of making dress, like manner, an expression of the mind, and the machinery, like the mysteries of life, poetical.

It is pleasant to recognise the comparative freedom of the gentler sex in relation to costume. The anomalies to which they are liable spring, not as with us, from restriction, but license. There are considerations touching dress in women that go deeper than taste. This is, no doubt, a grand requisite for the *lady*—a sense of the appropriate—one of the rarest and most indefinable instincts; a recognition in apparel of what society demands in one of her position; harmony of colors; adaptation to form, complexion, circumstances, and even character. These various elements, constituting both taste and

tact, appear in the attire as well as the behavior of what we call a perfect lady. But in addition to these ideas, and far above and beneath them, there is the *sentiment* of dress, the associations connecting it—not with society, which is the proper arena of the *lady*, but with the friend and the lover, the intrinsic sphere of the *woman*. A first-rate *modiste* can explain and apply the philosophy of dress, regarded as a conventional aid to success in life; but it requires deeper affinities to feel the many delicate and beautiful relations of this subject, which enter the heart through the imagination. The most obvious and striking fact in this view, is that simplicity triumphs over magnificence; nature, as usual, where the terms are even, takes the palm from art. To a man who has a genuine appreciation of the sex, a mind to perceive every latent grace, and a heart to cherish and forbear, as only nobleness and devotion can, all the tricks and detailed splendor of costume are a positive annoyance. The reason clearly is, that they are so many barriers and ceremonious obstacles between him and the mind and heart with which he would commune. They painfully remind him that the being who has awakened his interest, it matters not whether as a genius, a beauty, or simply as a woman, is the creature, more or less, of society, and that she is in some degree moulded by conventional influences. The idea is thus suggested that her true nature is somewhat perverted; she has adapted herself habitually, perhaps, to the world. Now, as the goal of all real feeling is truth and sympathy, urging the mind to track its fellow, the soul to claim its kindred—elaborate dress, being a thing of artifice and ostentation, seems to *put off* confidence and intimacy, to postpone true communion, and keep the external condition of society constantly in memory. "Women," says a

late writer, "only dress to gratify men of gallantry; for the lover is always best pleased with the simple garb." Hence it is that the most common and available personal ornaments are the most endearing. They have associations distinct from fashion. Thus, a veil suggests innumerable ideas, especially the sanctity of preference, the reserve which keeps the soul's temple closed but to one presence. The *mezzano*, as worn by every class of Genoese women, affects the stranger like a romance of youth. Yet it is but a simple embroidered handkerchief of white muslin, worn loosely upon the head. The most elegant bonnet never can equal the graceful simplicity of this head-dress for a brunette. To figures of a certain mould the *boddice* is remarkably adapted, yet it is essentially the dress of a southern peasant. The truth is, that female costume, regarded as a matter of feeling, resolves itself chiefly into the arraying of the head and neck. It is comparatively unimportant of what fabric a robe is composed, so that it fits the shape. I have seen many women who appear better in calico than silk. It is to the little inexpensive details that fancy clings. Collars are infinitely more winsome than a priceless necklace; and a plain cap of lace, or hair simply arranged, hath a sweet meaning never radiated from diamond coronets. Jean Paul says—"Nothing can embellish a beautiful face more than a narrow band that indicates a small wound drawn crosswise over the brow." Now, Richter was a man beloved of women as few men are, because he was a man of passion, intellect, and feeling combined. He was attracted through love, not vanity. He did not alone blindly idolize, but gave the objects of his regard the full advantage of his wisdom and the sincere overflowings of his tenderness. I have no doubt that his notion of a "narrow band

drawn crosswise over the brow," is the result of association. It certainly would not prove universally becoming. No; good Jean loved some woman with a small wound on her forehead, and thenceforth the head-band was charming to his eye.

WALKING.

Methinks to wander and to muse at will,
Redeemeth life from more than half its ill.
¡ OLD PLAY.

A WALK is the most available of recreations. "'Twill do me good to walk," says Othello, when first visited by the pangs of jealousy; and one of the old dramatists makes his hero, when baffled, very naturally suggest to a companion,

—"the fresh air and discourse
Will give us new inventions."

Pedestrianism is said to be a constitutional tendency. The English ladies are peculiar for habitually taking long excursions on foot; and whoever has travelled in Switzerland, must have been struck with the diversity of endurance with which the mountain paths are there explored by different individuals. Phrenologists declare that they can easily detect those who are natural pedestrians by their cerebral and physiological traits. The art of walking is at once suggestive of the dignity of man. Progressive motion alone implies power, but in almost every other instance, it seems a power gained at the expense of self-possession. Nothing can be more graceful than the flight of certain birds, but we associate the movement with the idea of its being the concentrated ability—the entire development of innate force. The action is all, the winged creature nothing; whereas, as we look upon a human form approaching us in a solitary place, it is with the consciousness that the mind's workings are uninterrupted by the locomotion—the process of

thought undiverted; it moves onward instinctively, retaining that ease, freedom, and upright attitude which distinguish a being endowed with reason. A ship under full sail before the wind, is a sublime object, but it is as a trophy of art, a product of invention, that it awakens our sympathies. We can but momentarily forget that its beautiful motion is unconscious, impelled, and involuntary. There is, on the contrary, scarcely an act of man that so instantly bespeaks will, as walking. It conveys the impression of a self-directing power. There is more or less of the creeping posture in the onward movement of animals; and the union of an erect attitude with locomotion, is one of the most striking and noble distinctions of humanity. On the stage, and in military or civic processions, we sometimes realize this quite vividly.

An appropriate pedestal is essential to the harmonious expression of every figure; and it has been truly said by an able physiologist, that the feet admirably confirm the idea. They realize the two conditions of firmness and adaptation, and wonderfully carry out the graceful plan of the human form, while its strength and flexibility are at the same time enhanced. The gradual increase of size which reaches its acme in the body, and is terminated, like the capital of a majestic pillar, by the head, does not interfere with the action of the numerous muscles and nerves which secure the varied necessary and elegant movements of the lower limbs, from the most refined evolutions of the dance to the simple walk. As an instance of mechanical contrivance merely, the arrangement is a study; while viewed in reference to the laws of beauty, we have but to recall the effective attitude of the Apollo, the courteous step of the gentleman, or the stately march of the hero, to perceive by what natural expedients utility and impressiveness may be combined.

The heel is more shielded with tendons, that the weight of the body may not press too severely upon the adjacent vessels; and the arch of the sole, by dispersing it, still further equalizes the pressure. It has been conjectured that the intricate web of nerves that lines the under part of the foot, has a magnetic office—drawing from the earth or carrying from the system, nervous stimulus. It is certain that a degree of sensitiveness is awarded this portion of the frame, the relation of which to vitality and locomotion has not been fully explained.

In walking, one foot sustains the body, while the other is thrust forward; its weight is then thrown upon the advanced foot, and so on alternately. The muscles act in unison, and yet how complicated their action, and unconscious and exact the process! It is on this account that we read character so easily by the walk—regular in the formal, quick in the ardent, bold in the resolute, hesitating in the timid, buoyant in the gay. It may be considered a distinct accomplishment to excel as a companion in walking, especially for women. The gait, manner, and by-way converse of those of the sex who have a Di Vernon dash in their natures, often exceed their fireside or ball-room aptitudes.

The gait affords much that is characteristic in natural language. Its degree of rapidity is indicative of temperament—a quick movement being attendant upon the sanguine and nervous, and a grave one upon the lymphatic or bilious. But there is also a moral significance in the gait. Duplicity is often betrayed by a cat-like, gliding step, and there is something frank in the very sound of an honest man's tread. We recognise the variety and meaning of the gait by many ordinary terms—that of affectation by mincing, of awkwardness by stalking, and of a loitering step by stroll. The gait, too, is professional. Sailors walk with a rolling movement, as if

balancing themselves at sea; soldiers march; tradesmen hurry, grisettes trip, coxcombs strut, poets saunter—and ghosts, says that of the noble Dane, are

"Doomed, for a certain time, to walk the night."

The relation of walking to thought is remarkable. More than one distinguished writer, of whose habits literary biography has informed us, found the influx of ideas or the flow of expression more ready and salient when under the influence of this movement. It undoubtedly relieves nervous excitability. I knew an eminent divine whose choicest productions were penned by means of an ink-horn attached to his button-hole and scraps of paper held upon a book, as he paced his study floor; and we are told that the most prolific novelist of the age dictates his manuscript to an amanuensis while he is engaged in an absorbing promenade.

It is natural to close a vague reverie, when something definite is attained, by rising and walking to and fro, although the reverse sometimes takes place, and we pause after restlessness of mind, and seek an attitude of repose, to luxuriate in a decisive feeling. A celebrated English actor was accustomed to remain seated while uttering the famous soliloquy in Hamlet, until he came to the line, "it is a consummation devoutly to be wished," when, with a self-assured mien, which struck the auditor as very true to nature, he commenced pacing the stage with a thoughtful air.

Doubtless the majority of thinkers can sympathize with Montaigne, who says—"Every place of retirement requires a walk. My thoughts sleep if I sit still; my fancy does not go by itself as when my legs move it, and all those who study without a book are in the same condition." The Grecian

philosophers walked beneath the porticos of the temples or in academic groves, with their pupils, as they unfolded the stores of their wisdom or argued the comparative truth of their several theories; and many of the impassioned preachers of the Catholic church, hasten backward and forward, in the narrow pulpit, appealing to the crowd below.

For a fit of irritability, there is no sedative like a walk. Hear wise old Prospero—

> "Sir, I am vexed;
> Bear with my weakness; my old brain is troubled.
> Be not disturbed with my infirmity;
> If you be pleased, retire into my cell,
> And there repose: *a turn or two I'll walk,*
> *To still my beating mind.*"

There are seasons when a footfall has a solemn echo. The regular tread of a sentinel at midnight, the paces which measure a duelling-ground, or the tramp of an army, on the eve of battle, stir the imagination; while the peculiar gait of the beloved is endearing. Of Laura, her lover said—

> "*Andar sua non era cosa mortale.*"

Baptista knows Francis is not a Paduan by his manner of walking the city, which he thought was "like a stranger;" and it is quite characteristic of Falstaff that he hated to "walk by the Counter-gate."

The bards derive many affecting similes from walking. Thus, Shakspeare says that

> "Poverty walks, like contempt, *alone.*"

And Tennyson describes

> "Beauty and anguish walking, *hand in hand,*
> The downward slope to death."

Hunt, who has a vein of natural epicurism in his tastes, wisely advocates a country residence within walking distance of town—

> "But then I would have the most rural of nooks
> Just near enough town to make use of its books,
> And *to walk there* whenever I chose to make calls,
> To look at the ladies and lounge at the stalls."

Wilson, in his striking poem on the Plague in London, speaks of faith which

> "Walks unquaking through the shades of death."

It is a touching image of fidelity adduced by Orlando of old Adam—

> "Who after me hath many a weary step
> Limped in pure love."

And Pierre's sense of the bitterness of local prejudice is significantly indicated in "Venice Preserved," thus—

> "Confess? Record myself
> A villain for the privilege to breathe,
> And *carry up and down* this cursed city
> A discontented and repining spirit?"

A very religious feeling prompted the line in Lycidas—

> "Through the dear might of him that walked the waves."

Thompson declares, in the spirit of true poetical superiority to fortune, and with the genuine zest of a dreaming pedestrian—

> "You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
> The woods or lawn, by living stream, at eve!"

Carlyle moralizes ably of human frivolity when he exclaims—"Light mortals, how ye walk your life-minuet over bottomless abysses, divided from you by a film!" And Wordsworth nobly

conveys the idea of a gifted peasant's self-subsistence in his ode to Chatterton—

"—— who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough along the mountain side."

Wolsey's pathetic retrospect of weary ambition begins by asserting that he had "*trod* the ways of glory;" and what a lovely metaphor is that of Barry Cornwall's, when he suggests the idea of a restrained footstep!—

"Tread softly, softly, like the foot
Of Winter shod with fleecy snow,
Who cometh white and cold and mute,
Lest he should wake the spring below."

A little world was opened to the fancy of Elia by the Jews, beggars, chimney-sweeps, old benchers and actors he encountered in his walks through the metropolis of England. I have seldom realized more perfectly the shades of deep meaning that may be hinted by the manner and air exhibited in walking, than was portrayed in the sketch of a native painter, representing the Saviour and two disciples in their walk to Emmaus, after the resurrection. The severe abstraction in the movement of the one, and the eager curiosity in that of his companions, shadowed forth most distinctly the language of the spiritual and the human. Dante's great poem, as regards its external design, may be described concisely as a walk through the realms of hell, purgatory, and paradise.

The promenades of some European cities are singularly inciting to cheerfulness. Their sites are often admirably chosen, without the dense ranges of buildings and near the sea the mountains, a river, or a grove. On a winter noon or spring evening, the change from an apartment overlooking noisy

thoroughfares, or from a crowded street to the free air and grateful prospects of these resorts, instantly yields refreshment. The charm, too, is frequently enhanced by the variety of costume and life-enjoying aspect of the scene. Here an old abbé or college-professor moves slowly on, in his dark robes, like the patriarch come forth to muse at eventide; on a bench sits a military character, with his heavy cap beside him; a flaxen-haired English child gambols around its complacent nurse; and a swarthy peasant-girl respectfully watches the group of ladies who talk gaily to their cavaliers on horseback, who surround the open carriage drawn up by the green pathway. Now and then from a band of music are heard the favorite airs of the season; and when they cease, a gust of wind among the pines, the plash of fountains, the murmur of a beach, a gay laugh or friendly cheer, falls pleasantly on the ear. The passing salutation, the renovating breeze, glimpses of the far horizon, and the mere sight of wave, sky, foliage, and human faces calm with the sense of genial leisure, then yield momentary solace alike to the careworn tradesman, the lonely stranger, and the sated belle.

Independent people are or ought to be good pedestrians. Landscape painters and naturalists, a class usually distinguished for their personal resources and avoidance of conventionalities, are usually fond of the long and solitary walks incident to their professions. They see, without envy, gay equipages dash by, deeming that their occupants have inevitable care annexed to their splendor:

> "You may hurry away on your lonely ride,
> Nor deign from the mire to save me,
> I will paddle it stoutly by your side
> With the tandem nature gave me."*

* Holmes.

Lonely walks are the delight of lovers. Speed gives, among other reasons for thinking Valentine absorbed by the tender passion, that "he walks alone;" and one of the questions with which the impatient Cleopatra assails Charmian, in regard to Antony, is, "Does he walk?" In truth, the most natural resource for either escaping or giving vent to a mood, is walking. What thoughts of sublimity and reminiscences of land fill the voyager's breast, as he walks the lonely deck at midnight, with the stars above and the waves around him; what a sense of luxury steals over the converse of kindred minds, in a garden-walk, on a summer evening, and what images of hope vivify the fancy of the youthful group, who walk the leafy isles of an American forest radiant with autumnal dyes!

Untimely walking evidences mental disorder. Lady Macbeth walked in her sleep from the unrest created by remorse; and poor Constance says of her dead Arthur—

> "Grief fills the room up of my absent child,
> Lies in his bed, *walks up and down with me.*"

The choice of walks is a revelation of character. To observant and sympathetic minds, there is no promenade so suggestive as the most frequented street of a metropolis. Many a passer hints a tragedy, and every group affords a glimpse of the comedy of life, to say nothing of the pleasure derived from a consciousness of being upon what Schiller calls the "stream of multitude."

> "Let me move slowly through the street
> Filled with an ever-shifting train,
> Amid the sounds of steps that beat
> The murmuring walks like autumn rain.
>
> "How fast the flitting figures come!
> The mild, the fierce, the stony face;

Some bright with thoughtless smiles, and some
Where secret tears have left their trace."*

The meditative find in woods and by the sea-shore, their best inspiration; and the world is full of consecrated walks, from Petrarch's favorite path at Vaucluse to the lane at Highgate, where Keats and his fellow bards used to wander.

The zest of a walk is its spontaneity. One can perceive a sad expression upon the faces of those formal citizens who, exactly at the same hour, daily take the same promenade, as if impelled by fate. The path is so familiar as to kindle no expectancy: the mind broods as if the body were stationary, and the only refreshment gained is derived from the air. Quite different is the effect of an aimless stroll, begun from a kind of instinct, and continued half unconsciously, with pleasant objects or a winsome voice to beguile the way. Routine is allied to duty and labor; its absence is essential to recreation. We should seek nature, like children, in so trustful and enjoying a mood as to be oblivious of law, and especially of self.

Insanity is usually produced by the tyranny of one idea or feeling which takes exclusive possession of consciousness; and every one capable of intense reflection or strong emotion, has felt, at times, the incipient stage of this malady when condemned by isolation or illness to a confined position. At such a crisis, the first impulse is to walk forth—not only by physical activity to divert mental disquietude, but, by multiplying external impressions, to break up the monotony and concentration of thought. The motion quickens the blood; the air oxygenates it; and a languor at last steals over the frame which, for the time, deadens the inward pang, and woos to the

* Bryant.

pleasant land of sleep, whence we emerge refreshed and elastic. But there is a more attractive phase of the subject than that suggested by the economy of nature. How many of the richest associations of our lives are connected with a walk! It is thus that we most readily place ourselves in relation with that spirit of wisdom and beauty which pervades the universe. The most reserved minds are then apt to unfold. I walked, on a summer afternoon, through a wood, with a poet remarkable for his graphic pictures of nature. He uttered exclamations of delight when he saw the grass-blade glint in the sunshine; not a fir-cone slept amid the herbage, not a moss-clump gleamed from a decayed root, not a pale wild-flower shot its slender stem through the mouldering leaves, but elicited his loving comment. I walked through an ancient city, by moonlight, with an artist. He bade me note the lofty cornice defined in the silver light, the symmetrical shadow of the tower, the impressive frown of the battlement, the airy spring of the fluted pillar, the depth of the crystal heavens, and the picturesque grouping of the fishermen as they clustered at the pier. I walked about a populous capital at mid-day with a humorist, and he excited my ceaseless mirth by the comic hints which life presented to his mind, by the way. Milton describes one of the joys of Eden to consist in walking through a garden. Genius has blended its richest annals with the scenery familiar to the walks of youth. Byron's fondness for haunting the ocean breathes in almost every poem. How sternly is the desolate locality where Crabbe roamed in boyhood, graven into his gloomy pictures; what a calm and pure mountain air steals from the page of Wordsworth; and how do the heather and the daisy that skirt the moors of Scotland, gem the effusions of Burns! Food for observation is yielded to the willing eye, by the most unattractive walk.

Whether aloes, with dew-drops pendent from their thorny sides, or fields of tufted maize that bends gracefully to the wind, or the flickering shade of noble elms, the shafts of dense cypresses or vast seas of prairie are around, insensibly the spirit of the landscape enters the mind and tinges it with sombre or bright imagery.

How many brave resolutions have been formed, how many vindictive feelings renounced, how many glorious works conceived, and how many delicious sympathies indulged in a walk! With the open sky above, the cheerful fields beside, and the free air around us, local annoyances and personal cares awhile vanish. We feel at liberty; nature whispers consoling thoughts; we move onward with a sense of alliance to her majestic forms and gentle ministry. Experience gradually shapes itself, by meditation, into a messenger of truth. Wild feeling becomes tranquil, clear, and satisfactory through the analysis of reflection. Departed joys are renewed in the magic glass of memory, and the sealed fountains of love gush again at the call of imagination. Released prisoners and fresh convalescents best realize the privilege of a walk. From them the dulness of custom has fallen; every step yields a sweet consciousness of power and every breeze is a greeting. To all contemplative minds there are memorable walks, enshrined by rich and genial companionship or felicity of mood, charm of locality or interesting circumstances: and to such, the kind of tree and herbage, the shape of hills that bounded the view, the odor of the vegetation, the rustle of lizards, or the notes of birds then experienced, have a perpetual charm, and their recurrence ever after

"Strikes the electric chain with which we're darkly bound."

A CHAPTER ON HANDS.

"Give me your hands!"
PERICLES.

SHYLOCK had reason, while enumerating his claims to humanity, to ask, "Has not a Jew hands?" I have just examined the sculptured hand of a child modelled from life, by an artist of exact eye, and whose chisel bestows a flesh-like surface upon its products. The abstract beauty of the hand is better realized when thus viewed; and if we combine with this perception a sense of its varied facility as a mechanical instrument, and its countless offices as a means of expression, we cannot but feel that it is one of the graceful mysteries which characterize human beings; and hence it is that the most pathetic line in the Corsair, occurs in the description of the dead Medora, where the poet speaks of "the cold flowers her *colder* hand contained."

The hand, in the light of comparative anatomy, most significantly marks the distinction between men and brutes. Its complex apparatus, and the relation between its performances and the mind, are so remarkable, that familiarity alone prevents their being observed with wonder. When we consider that its motions depend upon no less than twenty-nine bones, their certainty and vigor is marvellous. As an instrument, it combines, to an inconceivable degree, the almost antagonistic qualities of great strength and extreme delicacy, freedom of movement with nicety of action, and perfect ease with thorough control. The same machine whereby the athlete raises himself to the slack-

rope, or the blacksmith wields a ponderous sledge, is adapted to graduate the hues upon the artist's canvas, and modify sounds of the most exquisite musical instruments. The fingers, whose accurate sensation counts the pulsations of the invalid, when folded together, become a weapon, which, deftly managed, may fell a resisting Hercules; grasping a mechanic's tool they perform miracles of skill, and closed gently around the pen of genius, they act as the magnetic telegraph of the soul. The freedom of the hand's movements is ascribed to the collar bone, which keeps the shoulders apart, and distributes muscular effort to the arm; their fineness is owing to the wrist and finger bones, and the nervous tissue; and their ease seems to grow out of the union of all these. Power and flexibility are thus equally attained, and the result is an instrument which, guided by intelligence, is adequate to the homeliest and most exalted offices, and has for its sphere the whole domain both of the useful and fine arts, enabling the savage to weave bark-thatch for his log-hut, and Raphael to light up an eternal smile upon the lip of maternity; the mariner, by a regulated pressure, to guide his vessel with unerring helm over the trackless waters; and the sportsman, by the lightest touch, to bring to his feet the eagle that hovers in the clouds.

But, perhaps, the most extraordinary characteristic of the hand is its intimate relation to the will. The infinite quickness and certainty with which the former obeys the faintest intimation of the latter, is a study for the metaphysician. The hand is the mind's only perfect vassal, and when, through age or illness, the connexion between them is interrupted, there are few more affecting tokens of human decay. We seldom realize the nicety as well as promptitude of the hand's obedience. It is but the difference imperceptible to the eye, between the pressure

of a finger, which distinguishes a merely practised musician and the great masters of the violin and piano. A more sensitive nerve in the hand, communicating with a more glowing brain, is the proximate cause of the vast space between mechanical imitation and artistic genius. The engravings of Morghen, the busts of Powers, Gobelin tapestry, the bouquets of Genoa and Florence, the mosaics of Rome, and the lawns of England—whatever object or product is wrought or embellished by the hand, of acknowledged superiority in its kind, owes that distinction not more to peculiar aptitude in the hand itself, than to a closer alliance between it and the will, and a more keen intelligence, or a richer sympathy in the mind that prompts its action. Thus the hand becomes the representative of the individual, not only working out his casual objects, but giving embodiment to his noblest conceptions. It is this instant and complete response that induced the opinion once broached, that the hand was the seat of the will.

No less than fifty muscles consent to its simplest motion. The different length of the fingers accommodates them to a variety of grasp, as the rod which stirs the alembic must be held in quite a different manner, and perform a distinct office from the fishing-rod or the battle-axe. It has been truly said, that a hand, with reason to use it, supplies the natural defence of other animals. The muscles of the palm, which are so small and ever exposed, unlike those of other parts of the body, to contact and strain, are protected accordingly; and so intimately united are the eight bones of the wrist, that they form a ball which moves at the extremity of the radius. Such are the minute and effective contrivances which sustain and direct the wonderful mechanism of the human hand.

This apparent identity between the hand and the will, is

manifested by the old proverbs, "catch time by the forelock," and "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Indeed, expressions indicative of tenacity or readiness, are drawn chiefly from the movements of the hand. Thus we speak of seizing occasions, and holding on to promising objects. The sailor's phrase "let go," seems to give full scope to the breeze of accident and the tide of events, while "hands off" is the most colloquial of warnings to the tardy passer. The "sign manual," in law and courtesy, has an unquestioned authority, and the raised finger of a king challenges as much obeisance as a sanctioned watchword.

The henna-stained nails of the harem are typical of orientalism; the thrown gauntlet of the knight was a summons to the combat; and "gyves upon the wrist," in Hood's poem of Eugene Aram, tell the whole story of his capture. "Except these bonds," said St. Paul, lifting his manacled hands before Festus; and "may my right hand forget its cunning," was Webster's adjuration, should he ever lack magnanimity. "To palm off," is the Saxon for treachery; "make a hand of," the simple English for intrigue; and *buono mano* the Italian for a gratuity. Intention, desire, motive—all suggest themselves figuratively by epithets borrowed from the natural action of the hand; and the marriage rite hath for its almost universal symbol, encircling the finger with a little hoop of gold.

A vague sense of the intrinsic correspondence between the hand and thought, doubtless originated the idea of palmistry, and superstition hoped to discover in the varied lines of the open palm an index of character and destiny. A less fallacious test of the former has been recognised in the comparative heat or cold of the hand, as this indicates temperament, which in itself is no inadequate revelation of conduct. Thus the quick

or slow upfolding of the sensitive leaf betrays the touch of the sanguine or sympathetic. "There are," says Sir Thomas Browne, "certain mystical figures in our hands, which I dare not call mere dashes, strokes à la volée, or at random, because delineated by a pencil that never works in vain; and hereof I take more particular notice, because I carry that in mine own hand which I never could read or discover in another."*

In aristocratic portraits, the shape of the hands is remarkably elegant, and Byron was undoubtedly correct in regarding the beauty of this feature as an indication of gentle blood. It is said that long before Keats died, he was accustomed to prophesy his fate by the swollen veins of his hands, which, he said, looked like those of a man of fifty. There is an instinctive association with personal character in the disposition of the hands. Thus, the most effective likeness of Sterne represents him with the forefinger on the temple, where phrenologists locate the organ of wit. Napoleon, at St. Helena, is always depicted with folded arms, because they indicate a passive and thoughtful state; and in one of the most appropriate designs for a statue of Washington, the left hand rests on a sheathed sword, while the right points upward. The peculiar melancholy suggested by Egyptian sepulchral monuments, as well as many of the effigies on Italian tombs, arises from the utterly listless or confined position of the hands. It gives the figure the aspect of helplessness; the voluntary power seems annihilated, and a feeling instantly arises of a completed destiny and final sleep:

> "His palms are folded on his breast;
> There is no other thing expressed,
> But long disquiet merged in rest."

* Religio Medici.

In the grace of elocution, the dignity of rule, and the natural language of social intercourse, the hand enacts a greater part than we are apt to recognise. In all those noble gestures which convey moral impressions, the extended arm and open palm are vastly expressive. In the cartoons of Raphael, and the apostolic statues of Thorwaldsen, this is finely illustrated. There is a passage in one of Southey's poems which eloquently points out the significance of such gestures:

> "Toward the shore he spread his arms
> As if the expanded soul diffused itself,
> And carried to all spirits, with the act,
> Its affluent inspiration."

To show how justly, in art and life the action of the hand is characteristic, were an endless theme. In poetry, by citing one of its movements, an entire history or picture is suggested. Scott, to express the warrior's unconquered heroism, tells us that "with dying hand he shook the fragment of his blade;" the old masters always portrayed Cleopatra "holding the viper to her snowy breast," which instantly fills the imagination with the cycle of her being—voluptuous beauty, imperious will, and impassioned death. In the museum at Naples, there is a statue of Aristides, and the manner in which his robe is gathered up in his hand, gives a complete idea of the inflexible justice of his nature.

One of the most common signs of want of breeding, is a sort of uncomfortable consciousness of the hands, an obvious ignorance of what to do with them, and a painful awkwardness in their adjustment. The hands of a gentleman seem perfectly at home without being occupied; they are habituated to the *dolce far niente*, or if they spontaneously move, it is attractively.

Some of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers made playing with their sword-hilt an accomplishment, and the most efficient weapon of the Spanish coquette is her fan. Strength in the fingers is a sure token of mental aptitude. When Mutius burnt his hand off before the eyes of his captor, he gave the most indubitable proof we can imagine of fortitude; and it was natural that, amid the ferocious bravery of feudal times, a bloody hand in the centre of an escutcheon should become the badge of a baronet of England.

The phenomena of touch have been less investigated than those of the other senses, from which it is altogether distinct. The nerves of touch are inclosed in spiral ridges of cuticle at the pulpy end of the fingers, and still more shielded by the nails. All familiar with the modern education of the blind, are aware to what extent the sense of touch may be cultivated, so, in a measure, to take the place of sight. Manipulation is almost a science by itself, the nicer processes of the artisan, refined modelling in clay, the minute sculpture of the lapidary, and those delicate surgical operations which require the most precise guidance of an instrument among nerves and arteries, seem to justify the saying of Anaxagoras, that the superiority of man was owing to his hand.

When we consider that the nervous tissue, ramifying from the brain, spreads itself intricately through the hand where touch is located, there seems little romance in assenting to the enthusiastic interpretation of the sounds of a violin when swayed by genius, and the healing, exciting, or somniferous influence ascribed to the hand of the magnetizer. In some persons the sensitiveness of touch is so great, that to feel of certain fabrics, or come in physical contact with ungenial individuals, produces the most decided nervous revulsion. Domestic, and even wild

animals, are remarkably susceptible to the human touch, and may be soothed, in ferocious moods, by the hand they recognise. There is, indeed, an exquisite sensibility and influence residing in the hand, which, in rare organizations, may be said to constitute a world of sensation and efficiency, "caviare to the general."

In southern countries, kissing the hand is a loyal salutation. On a beautiful winter evening, I disembarked at an island in the Mediterranean, in company with a lady who had been, for some months, absent from her home. She stood at the head of the staircase of her *palazzo*, and every servitor respectfully imprinted a kiss upon her hand. There was in their manner of so doing, a fidelity and pleasure delightful to witness. The practice is recognised in several of Shakspeare's dramas. "Why, this is he who kissed away his hand in courtesy." "You kiss your hand," says Colin to Touchstone; "that courtesy would be unclean at court, if courtiers were shepherds—they are often tarred over with the surgery of our sheep. The courtier's hands are perfumed with civet."

In dramatic literature, especially, we find constant figurative allusion to the hand, as the symbol of both will, intelligence, and character. Thus Brutus reproaches Cassius with avarice, by declaring he has "an itching palm;" and the ambitious Thane's sceptre is said to be wrenched "with an unlineal hand." Of one it is observed, that his hand was made to handle naught but gold, and of another, "to grasp a palmer's." Among the undisputed traits of beauty, seems to be a white hand. "My lady has a white hand," boasts Olivia's clown; and Biron, sending a missive to his love, tells the messenger—

> "And to her white hand, see that thou do commend
> This sealed up counsel."

Romeo speaks of the "white wonder of dear Juliet's hand;" and this exclamation he utters as he gazes upon her from the garden,—an instance of Shakspeare's masterly union of the picturesque and the affecting. We see a picture—Juliet in the balcony, precisely in the attitude natural under the circumstances and, at the same time, sympathize with the impatient devotion of her lover as he thus beholds her. Nothing can be more appropriate than the very poetical extravagance of his apostrophe:

> "See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand;
> O that I were a glove upon that hand,
> That I might touch that cheek!"

But, in two instances, the poet of nature has given us hints of the philosophy of this subject, in so dramatic and moving a way, that the scenes live in remembrance, consecrated alike by the genius which makes vital, and the truth to nature that endears them. In the two most earnest phases of the soul—love and remorse, the hands are made to illustrate their connexion with the mind, and, for the moment, endowed with prophecy and retribution. It is poetry, indeed, but founded in truth. When that "noble and loving nature" is first put upon the rack of agonized suspicion, the sight of Desdemona for an instant disarms his fears. He exclaims: "O, hardness to dissemble!" and then gazes inquiringly upon her face, wherein he had been wont to read his own devoted love, beaming in reflected but genuine expression, in order, if possible, to peruse the heart where he had "garnered upon his hopes." The scrutiny is useless. There is the same ingenuous, tender, and womanly look; but the demon in his brain repeats Iago's fiendish insinuation, and by an impulse the most natural, he seizes her

hand—that hand by which he led her to the altar, whose lightest touch, heretofore, had power to thrill him with confident joy; he inspects the lines of the palm, attempts to realize afresh its sensation, to test, as it were, its magnetism, and thus doing, peers into her eyes with a mind aching for the truth:

Othello. How do you, Desdemona?
Desdemona. Well, my good lord.
O. Give me your hand: this hand is moist, my lady.
D. It yet has felt no age, nor known no sorrow.
O. This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart:
Hot, hot, and moist: this hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here's a young and sweating devil here
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.
D. You may, indeed, say so:
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.
O. A liberal hand: the hearts of old gave hands,
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts!

This dialogue is a perfect indication of the two states of mind —unsuspecting love and perverting suspicion. The hand is spontaneously recognised as an exponent both of honor and love.

And what picture of a troubled conscience has ever been imagined equal to the night-walking scene in Lady Macbeth? She had been used to "lave her dainty hands" from childhood, but having once stained them with human blood, it seemed to her reproachful heart that the "damned spot" would never out. There is something irresistibly pathetic in the moaning whisper, "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." The epithet "little" applied to her hand, brings up the idea of

the gentleness of her sex in contrast with the horror of her crime, in a manner singularly accordant with dramatic truth.

Doct. What is it she does now? Look how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands; I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Out, damned spot!

An election was carried in Massachusetts by adopting as a rallying word the term "hard-hand," an unfortunate epithet which some orator of the opposition had given to the farmers and mechanics. It was immediately seized upon on the same principle that Yankee Doodle was adopted as the continental air, and by reminding the party of the derision of their enemies, worked their most spirited resistance. It is the glorious boast of the republican to cast—

"With unpurchased hand,
The vote that shakes the turrets of the land."

In most countries, the oath is administered with the hand either gravely uplifted, or laid upon a sacred relic. The *claqueurs* of the Parisian theatres earn a livelihood by applause; and, to pass at once from such an unromantic matter-of-fact, to a bit of sentimental philosophy, Dante says:

Si comprende,
Quanto in femmina, fuoco d'amor dura
Se l'occhio *o'tatto* spesso nol raccende.*

The hands are, by the very instinct of humanity, raised in prayer, clasped in affection, wrung in despair, pressed upon the forehead when "chaos is come again," and the soul is "perplexed in the extreme;" drawn inward to invite, thrust forth

* Purgatorio.

objectively to repel; the fingers point to indicate, and are snapped in disdain; the palm is laid upon the heart in invocation or subdued feeling, and on the brow of the compassionated in benediction. What is consciously held in pictures or on the stage, is emblematic to the most careless observer. Dido, with her willow-branch, tells us she is abandoned; Richard III., with his prayer book, enacts the hypocrite; the crook in the hand reveals the shepherd, a baton the marshal, a cross the devotee, a tome the scholar, a telescope the navigator, and so on through the whole symbolized category of human vocations, each holds fast that which is good unto him.

I was never more struck with the expressive capacity of the hands, than in witnessing the orisons of the deaf and dumb. Their teacher stood, with closed eyes, and addressed the Deity by those signs made with the fingers which constitute a language for the speechless. Around him were grouped more than a hundred mutes, following with reverend glances every motion. It was a visible but not an audible worship. A locust hummed in the branches of an adjacent elm, and the summer air stirred the leaves that hung beside the open window; otherwise, the profound silence of a Quaker meeting brooded over the assemblage. Few public acts of religious devotion ever impressed me like this. The very hearts—the still small voice, in each bosom, seemed communing with the Creator. It was a most affecting recognition of the fatherhood of God.

After Hamlet's mind has been solemnized by the revelations of his father's ghost, he manifests a consciousness of the new and sad responsibility which has come over his life, by a significant shaking hands with his friends, intimating by the action, with the delicate consideration of a noble soul, that he has bade

a rewell to ordinary sympathies, in consequence of having been called into relation with the supernatural:

> "Why, right, you are in the right,
> And so, without more circumstance at all,
> I hold it fit that we shake hands and part,
> You as your business and desire shall point you,
> For every man hath business and desire
> Such as it is;—for my own part,
> Look,—I will go pray."

The mere offer of the hand is the readiest sign of voluntary courtesy or forgiveness, and its non-acceptance the most civil yet meaning of repulses.

Shaking hands is a mode of greeting, the origin of which is lost in obscurity. Individuals display character in their mode of so doing. Who cannot feel at once the antagonism between the touch of a prude and the cordial grasp of a friend? Who knows not the sailor's grip of candid heartiness from the conventional, *passant* "giving of hands?" How perfectly does the graduated or lingering pressure cause the mercury in love's barometer to rise or fall by the scale of hope! What sympathies and antipathies are demonstrated by the various degrees of kindly, irresolute, vivacious, careless, fond, or earnest manner of shaking hands! It is this relation between temperament, feeling, consideration, and the instinctive action of the hand, which has given rise to those theories which profess to read the predominant impulses of character in the traits of chirography.

THE NEW YORK COLONISTS.

"And range with humble livers in content."

HENRY VIII.

THE claims of the Pilgrims have been more than vindicated. The anniversary of their landing is widely celebrated. New England has produced more writers than all other sections of the country, and her annals have been recorded with a particularity which leaves little for the future antiquarian to discover. Scarcely one of her villages but can boast its historian. The Yankees are proverbially shrewd observers and industrious chroniclers; and the many beautiful tributes pronounced at Plymouth, and before local societies dedicated to the memory of the Puritans, seem pledges that oblivion will not soon cast its relentless wave over New England's early story. It is otherwise with New York. Her colonial history, prior to the Revolution, is comparatively barren of events of striking moral influence. Let not this make us unmindful of its claims. Gibbon, in his "Roman Empire," in briefly passing over the reign of some prince, acknowledges that the less there is for history to record, the happier for mankind. The original settlers of New York came not to plant creeds, but to find homes. No fierce war of opinion kept society in a ferment. They professed no grand moral enterprise. They were honest, but unambitious men. To live unmolested, to enjoy the comforts of life in peace, was all they sought. Let us not on this account condemn them. Let us acknowledge the honest manliness that made

them so prize "the glorious privilege of being independent," and the bravery with which they met all the hardships of uncivilized life, to leave their children free and happy firesides. Although they had no poet, let us not suffer their memories to die.

The few pictures of Dutch life that have come down to us, are far from unattractive. Some delightful sketches, published many years since in England, furnish a charming outline, which imagination readily fills out, of the simple manners and native integrity by which the early colonists fashioned their lives.* It is remarkable, that the only popular picture of these times and people should be a caricature; nor must we be surprised that "Knickerbocker's New York" should be quoted in Europe as a veritable history, until some serious effort is made to redeem the fame and brighten the dusty but untarnished escutcheon of these honest Dutch. It is difficult to account for their comparative misappreciation. We always fancy a Dutchman as a corpulent, sleepy fellow, with a pipe in his mouth. Yet is there not an enviable wisdom in their tranquil philosophy? It is true, that in the march of mind they were "dragged along in the procession," but if rational enjoyment and a contented spirit be any test of character, they may claim no inferior rank among the nations. Consider their history. For more than a century, learning, science, and philosophy found their sole refuge in the free states of Holland. Recall the bravery with which they resisted their Spanish invaders; the enterprise that so long made their ships the carriers of all Europe; the patient industry which constructed those immense dykes that render Holland one of the most remarkable of countries; the genius

* Mrs. Grant's "Memoirs of an American Lady."

exhibited in their school of painting—no inadequate illustration of their national character—which triumphs in a humble sphere, and, if it create not the Madonnas of Raphael or the angels of Correggio, makes the canvas glow with many a scene of homely festivity, and invests the most common-place objects with a picturesque charm.

There are few objects, in this country, which convey to my mind so significant an idea of comfort as an old Dutch dwelling. Its ample portico alone seems an emblem of hospitality; and I cannot but sympathize with the murmurs of the few old inhabitants of Rockland county, who so reluctantly yield up their ancient landmarks to the devouring locomotive. The hunting and trading excursions of the early colonists made them as hardy in the field as they were contented in their homes, so that it was a proverb, during the Revolution, that a well-armed body of New York provincials had nothing to fear but an ague or an ambush. Cheap literature was unknown in those days, but when Colonel Schuyler brought from England "Paradise Lost" and the "Spectator," every intelligent person in the colony made them a study for years. The influx of other than the original settlers, such as the French Protestants, induced liberality of feeling; and their equal condition kept at bay that "unconquered devil—ambition," which lays waste so large a portion of modern dignity and happiness. The very pride of opinion that the Puritans cherish, would have been a pernicious element in the American character, had it not been modified by the less intellectual but more genial characteristics of the New York colonists. If the New Englander represented the great principle of reform, the Manhattanese embodied the no less grand principle of conservatism. If the New England character furnished the sails when our ship of state was

launched, the Dutch emigrants were the ballast that kept her in trim. If in New York there was less obvious religious zeal than in Massachusetts, there was less also of bigotry; if there was less enterprise, there was more contentment; if less of public spirit, there was more personal independence. If the schoolmaster was not abroad, the bitterest fruits of the tree of knowledge remained unplucked. If no marble banks adorned their streets, well-stocked barns gave assurance of wealth no less substantial. If the even tenor of life yielded few striking points to the annalist, the peace that reigned in every bosom, put to shame the bloody tales of history; and if poetry found little to celebrate, existence itself was like an acted poem, gliding onward in beautiful tranquillity.

EYE-LANGUAGE.

No tongue ; all eyes.
TEMPEST.

OF Nature's minute wonders, the human eye is the paragon. Vainly will Science explore her rich arcana for a more impressive example of the marvels she would illustrate. But it is not the apparatus which the delicate knife of the anatomist reveals—the retina and lenses, or even their combined arrangement, that most strikingly indicates the subtle workmanship involved in the little fleshy globule we call the eye;—it is the effect they produce, the purposes they subserve, the results they accomplish. Far greater are these than the careless crowd dream of; far more marvellous than even the intelligent and imaginative can fully realize. The phenomenon of sight is, indeed, sufficiently extraordinary. Not less so are the minor missions which the visual organ fulfils. The eye speaks with an eloquence and a truthfulness surpassing speech. It is the window out of which the winged thoughts often fly unwittingly. It is the tiny magic mirror on whose crystal surface the moods of feeling fitfully play, like the sunlight and shadows on a still stream. Yes—if there is one material form through which the spirit is visible, and with which, when humanly embodied, it has specially to do, that form is the EYE. Even in animals it is emphatically the expressive feature. Who that has noted the look of timid fondness with which a recreant dog approaches his master, or observed the gleam of woe with which the dying deer regards

his hunters—and has not felt this? How much more significant is the language of the human eye! How ceaselessly does it represent the soul! The instrument by which our most valuable knowledge is received; it is, at the same time, the outward interpreter of the inward world. How immediate and delicate is the spirit's sway over the aspects and movements of this complicated organ! Instinctively it is raised in devotion, and bent downward in shame. When enthusiasm lends fire to the soul, the eye flashes; when pleasure stirs the heart, the eye sparkles; when deep sorrow darkens the bosom, the eye distils hot tears, "faster than Arabian trees their medicinal gum;" when confidence stays the mind, the eye looks forth proudly; when love fills the breast, the eye beams with glad sympathy; when insanity desolates the brain, the eye roves wildly; and

> "———o'er the eye Death most exerts his might,
> And hurls the spirit from her throne of light."

Thus through all the epochs of human experience, the eye typifies the workings of the soul.

To a warm-hearted wanderer through the world—to one who finds in his fellow-beings the chief sources of by-way pleasure—to a benevolent cosmopolite who is an adept in eye-language, it is a delightful and constant resource. He may be a silent man as far as regards his organs of speech, yet he is ever conversing. In a stage-coach, by one glance around, he discovers with whom he can find sympathy. With these he interchanges looks during the journey, and enjoys all the delights of sociability with none of its trials. He reads family histories in the eye-language of their members. If he but catch the "bonnie blue e'en" of the passing peasant girl, a cheerful humor is induced which abides with him for hours. And the momentary beaming of a pair of

dark lustrous orbs, fills him with high and moving thoughts. A glance to him is rife with expression, beyond that of his vernacular tongue. And thus gazing into these fountains for refreshment, and drawing thence inspiration and solace, his eye at length meets one, the glance of which is deeply responsive—an eye that shines like the star of a happy destiny into his soul, and he is not again contented till the beautiful orb beams only for him, and becomes the light of his home. The most interesting portion of his studies in eye-language is completed. A modern writer, in order to illustrate an almost indescribable sentiment, says "it was like the eye of a woman first loved to the soul of the poet."

There is no lack of well-authenticated instances to prove the power of eye-language. An infuriated animal has often been kept trembling at bay by the steadfast gaze of man, beneath which its own angry eye quailed, yet could not turn aside. I knew a venerable man who kept a powerful ruffian quietly seated in his little parlor for an hour at night, while the only servant of his small household was absent in quest of aid, merely by silently fixing upon him a fearless look, such as awed his perverted heart and chained his strong limbs. Many a rebuke has been silently but deeply conveyed, by the calm yet indignant glance of the injured. How intuitively does a child understand the slightest expression of its mother's eye! How well do congenial beings comprehend their affinity before any communion, save that of eye-converse! Consider, too, the singular duration of the impression imparted by this feature. The world abounds with minute symbols. Each small and exquisite flower, gem, or insect, addresses the sense of the beautiful; yet they interest but for a moment. What more expressive similitude has poetry found for the stars, than "angels' eyes?" The living

gem of nature is the eye, and how like a spell doth its language haunt us! Even in the pictures of the old masters, the effect is often centred in the expression of this single organ. What fanciful man, having an inkling of superstition within him, has not sometimes imagined a portrait animated with life? Cover the eyes, and the fantasy is gone. It has been finely remarked of Titian's portraits that they look at us more than we at them. We may forget the countenance of a friend from whom we are divided, in many respects; but if our interest has ever been truly awakened in a fellow-being, the eye-language of the individual can scarcely escape our memories. Who cannot recal, though he may not describe, the eye-language with which a gifted man, under some strong inspiration, has uttered a memorable thought, or with which one near and dear to him has breathed aught of deep interest to his ear? The dignity of self-possessed thought was in the eye of Paul, ere his words affected Festus. The beaming glance of the Grecian mother pointed out her jewels before her lips proclaimed them. The unfortunate know a friend and are re-assured, the timid recognise a master-spirit and are nerved, and the guilty know their accuser and quail, at the first momentary meeting of their gaze. Beware of the man whose eye you can never meet.

Correggio excelled in painting downcast eyes; those of Allston's pictures are remarkable for their grey, intellectual expression. The St. Cecilia of Raphael probably presents the best instance in the art, of the upturned eyes of inspiration. Eye-language is richly illustrated in the pages of Shakspeare. What an idea is given of its perversion in Lear's adjuration to the unfortunate Gloster:—

> Get thee glass eyes;
> And like a scurvy politician, seem
> To see the things thou dost not.

Addressing Regan, he says of Goneril, "her eyes are fierce, but thine do comfort and not burn." Cordelia envies not their "still soliciting eyes," and her more honest orbs, at length, prove their simplicity, by shedding "tears as pearls from diamonds dropped." Othello when first awaked to jealousy, in order to satisfy his doubts, exclaims to Desdemona, "let me see your eyes!" Alas! that he did not credit their truthful expression! Fear, too, is strongly evinced by the same wondrous organs. In the awful hints the Ghost gives Hamlet of "that undiscovered country," among the effects prophesied from a more full revelation, is to make his "eyes like stars start from their spheres." In some eyes, the bard bids us behold "a lurking devil," in others "love's richest book,"—in the poet's "a fine phrensy;" and, be it remembered, it was upon the eyes that Puck was ordered to squeeze the little purple flower. Perdita with her fine imagination, could find no better similitude for "violets dim" than "the lids of Juno's eyes." Prospero exultingly declares, when Ferdinand and Miranda meet, "at the first glance, they have changed eyes." Hear Olivia in Twelfth Night:

> "Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
> With an invisible and subtle stealth,
> To creep in at mine eyes."

What poet has presented such an image of the closed eyes of beauty as that contained in Iachimo's soliloquy over the sleeping Imogen?—

> "the flame o' the taper
> Bows towards her, and would underpeep her lids
> To see th' inclosed lights now canopied
> With blue of Heaven's own tinct."

The prominent part this miraculous little globe performs in love, is indicated by Romeo in Capulet's garden;

> "She speaks, yet she says nothing; what of that?
> Her eye discourses, I will answer it."

And when Juliet warns him of her kinsman's designs, he ardently exclaims,—

> "Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
> Than twenty of their swords; look thou but sweet,
> And I am proof against their enmity."

The fair object of his passion, as if to reciprocate the sentiment, upon the idea of his death, cries out,—

> "To prison eyes! ne'er look on liberty!"

Wolsey anticipated his downfall from the glance of King Henry;—"ruin leaped from his eyes." Faulconbridge, as the favors of fortune depart from King John, bids him

> "Let not the world see fear and sad distrust
> Govern the motions of a kingly eye."

Biron, in Love's Labors Lost, in balancing the advantages of book-lore and eye-language, declares—

> "From woman's eye this doctrine I derive:
> They are the ground, the books, the academies,
> From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.
> For where is any author in the world
> Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye?"

How finely is the moral expression of the eye suggested by the Friar who advocates the innocence of Hero;—

> ——— "in her eye there hath appeared a fire,
> To burn the errors that these princes hold,
> Against her maiden truth."

Bassanio augurs his success with Portia because, he says,

> "Sometimes from her eyes
> I did receive fair, speechless messages."

And even the incorrigible Benedick says to Beatrice—"I will be buried in thy eyes." Phœbe declares of Rosalind—

> "faster than his tongue
> Did make offence, his eye did heal it up."

In discussing the beauty of the ancient Greeks, Shelley suggests that the eye of the women of that nation, on account of their social degradation, "could not have been deep and intricate from the workings of the mind." Eye-language is, indeed, no light test of cultivation; of native disposition it is a most authentic reporter. Hunt, in describing the hero of Rimini, alludes with singular beauty, to the

> "easy dignity there lies
> In the frank lifting of his cordial eyes."

Who has not realized the power of Byron's simile—"like the light of a dark eye in woman?" Falstaff vaunts of Page's wife, "sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly." Uncle Toby's dangerous experiment in the sentry-box is well known; and what a holy guidance Petrarch found in the eyes of Laura!

> "Gentil mia donna, io veggio
> Nel mover de' vostri occhi un dolce lume
> Che mi mostra la via che al ciel conduce."

An old dramatist has this conceit;—

> "A smile shoots graceful upward from her eyes
> As if they had gained a victory o'er grief;

And with it many beams twisted themselves,
Upon whose golden threads the angels walk
To and again from heaven."

Eye-language, in its sweetest manifestations, is unfortunately liable to change, like everything delightful upon this earth. Touching this, a bacheloric essayist of some note thus reasoneth: —"Ask the married man who has been so but a short time, if those blue eyes, where, during many years of anxious courtship, truth, sweetness, serenity, seemed to be written in characters which could not be misunderstood, ask him if the characters they now convey be exactly the same? if for truth, he does not read a dull virtue (the mimic of constancy), which changes not only because it wants the judgment to make a preference? if for sweetness he does not read a stupid habit of being pleased at everything; if for sincerity he does not read animal tranquillity, the dead pool of the heart which no breeze of passion can stir into health."

According to Burke, clearness has much to do with the beauty of the eye, and a languid movement of the organ is most fascinating. Thus Venus is represented with drooping lids. It is observable that while intense thought is indicated by a fixed gaxe, pleasurable emotions, especially of a quiet kind, induce the lids to fall somewhat, while the orb gently rolls. A naturalist once gave me a most vivid description of a species of eagle common in the West, the vibration of whose eye corresponded precisely with that of the second-hand of an old-fashioned clock. Whoever has attentively watched the progress of a bust under the hand of a modeller, must have realized the importance of shape in giving its peculiar character to the eye. Indeed, the skill of an artist may be estimated in no small degree, by his success in this regard. Inferior sculptors gene-

rally fail in representing nice distinctions in the form of the individual eye, which once caught, gives it even in the cold and colorless marble, a life-like appearance.

Richly expressive as is the human eye, the depths and gradations of its language are not to be lightly scanned. Men of the most profound sentiment not unfrequently wear an aspect of indifference, because common life awakens not their spirits. We are often startled by the eye-language of such persons, from the intensity with which it breaks from the dimness of habitual reserve. I remember two nobly endowed individuals—devoted to very different pursuits—whose eyes are seldom lifted from the downward gaze of meditation. I have often remarked the effect upon their whole aspect, when, under the excitement of a happy thought, they raise their eyes from their veiled abodes. The sudden rising of a smiling star in a monotonous sky, or the quick gleaming of a sunbeam athwart a dim landscape, could not be more electrical. We are told of Coleridge, that in moments of intense abstraction, his eyes were so void of language as to appear almost senseless; yet in an expressive mood, they were proverbially eloquent. And it is said of Schiller, "his deportment, his gait, the mould of his limbs, his least motion was dignified and grand, *only his eyes were soft.*" Whoever remarked the eye of Spurzheim when he spoke of "the little beings"—children, must have realized the mildness and warmth of his benevolence. I can never forget the conception of the power of eye-language which dawned upon me, on seeing an Italian vocalist, at the very climax of an opera, suffer the melody to die away, and *look* the intense feeling of the moment so effectively as to visibly impress the silent multitude. Having heard much of the eye-language of an accomplished lady, I was several times at great pains to observe, but was

invariably unsuccessful. The conversation, in every instance, had been of a general nature, which helped to reconcile me to the disappointment. Being soon after possessed of some circumstances of the lady's history which gave me a clue to her inward experience, I managed on the next opportunity to draw her into a brief, but touching narration. The gradual increase of expression and eventual melting gaze induced by the excitement, was more moving than any pathos of mere words or circumstance that I ever knew.

The comparative dearth of eye-language in this country, is lamentably significant of the narrow sway of the Ideal, and the rarity of fresh and spontaneous self-development. Exceptions, many and brilliant, there doubtless are ;—but the traveller who has been wont to note the eloquent activity and profundity of expression of the eye in most of the continental countries, will feel, as he wanders about this republic, a difference, not to say a deficiency in this respect. The guarded expression, the waving, the indifferent, or at best merely brisk tenor of eye-language among the busy men around him, cannot escape his notice. And when from beneath a fair brow, or in the glance of an enthusiast, the mystic organ speaks with unwonted freedom and effect, he feels revived as by a fondly-remembered tone. Beautiful are the workings of the mystic and microscopic machine. The flowers and the stars speak a moving language ; but from the eye beams what will endure when fragrance and light are no more. The curious characters of written language —barren words treasured by lexicographers, and arbitrarily decreed—the lovelier hieroglyphics which bespangle the sky, or deck the fields,—what are they compared with the more subtle signs which beam in the visual organs—the breathings of the soul, in that

"Bright ball on which the spirit sat
Through life, and looked out in its various moods
Of gentleness, and joy, and love, and hope,
And gained this frail flesh credit in the world."

HUMOR.

"To fleet the time lightly as they did in the golden age."
As You Like It.

The affinity between humor and sentiment has rarely been so exquisitely indicated as in the writings of Hood. We know of instances, indeed, of their coincident manifestation with equal or greater richness, but none in which they seem so closely allied and mutually active. One reason, undoubtedly, is that Hood's literary development was an incessant series of ebullitions, instead of distinct and elaborate efforts. The smile and the tear alternate, at his invocation, with a transition so rapid, that our sympathies, if once yielded to his page, are either oppressed with the solemn associations of life or buoyant with its absurd phases. "Hero and Leander" is as serious an exposition of the tender passion as can readily be found, and "Eugene Aram's Dream" touches the remorseful chord in every heart, while it is acknowledged that the humanity of the age has been more effectively stirred by the "Song of the Shirt" than the most eloquent charity sermon; yet the puns, whimsicalities, and ludicrous sketches of character, from the same pen, have identified the author's name with the risible faculty to a greater extent, perhaps, than that of any modern writer. Every healthy mind is bound to recognise and indulge the comic in some way or other. Popular amusements, literature, and social life obey this law; and where it is evaded through asceticism or wilfulness, the inroads of care become corroding and the

elasticity of the spirits is destroyed. The morality of the principle is evident. *Un tristo*, among the Italians, signifies not only a sad but a dangerous character; and the ability to relish a joke is essential not only to good companionship, but to candor. It has to do with the natural sentiments as well as the perceptive organs. Even Michael Angelo, whose genius was of the most dignified order, used to "enjoy the harmless comedy of life." An eye for the ridiculous, a sense of the grotesque in combination and the quaint in character, usually accompany a love of the beautiful and an admiration of the grand. Burke romped with children; the letters of Keats abound in vivacious allusions, and those of Cowper and Burns are often playful in their tone.

Humor is doubtless intended as the safety-valve of concentrative minds, and its prevalence, in the English race, is owing to their reserve of character, which finds no vent through a mercurial temperament like the French and Italians. It has been often remarked that earnest men excel in humor, and we perceive how benign is the law which thus tempers elements of fearful intensity. In social life, there are no characters which are thoroughly satisfactory except those which unite these fundamental traits, for they only can meet the wants of both mind and heart. We need earnestness in a companion to respond to our affections, to recognise our serious ideas, to re-assure our distrustful moods, and to reason with us of "foreknowledge, will, and fate;" we need a sense of the ridiculous, a playful fancy, a capacity of *abandon*, to help us lighten the burden of care, to recreate the weary mind, to make holiday and "fleet the time lightly as they did in the golden age." Not to speak irreverently, the holiest of beings has indicated how nearly allied these primal qualities are to moral excellence and true religion.

In the two monitions, when expanded by reflection to their complete significance, "become as little children" and "enter into thy closet," we have the extremes of the unconscious and the voluntary, passivity and action—the play and the work of the mind—the humor and the earnestness whose alternations are the instinct of superior natures. A colloquy in the forest of Arden and a soliloquy of Hamlet represent the same thing with dramatic truth. Of late English writers, Dickens is the most effective in humor. To those whose perception in this regard is keen, the most attractive passages in his writings, are those frequent episodes where his fancy revels with inanimate things, or seizes a peculiarity of aspect or manner in its humorous relations. It is observable that he lingers over and returns with evident pleasure to such ideas, and dallies with them with singular vivacity.

It is essential to the charm which I have attempted to describe, that a voluntary, complacent, and easy spirit should prevail. The least appearance of restraint or effort mars the design, for the very term humor signifies indulgence, the yielding to a mood and luxurious dalliance with fancy. The locomotive facilities of our times have affected even literature with dispatch. When we take up a volume published a century or two ago, the first characteristic that strikes us is a certain repose and air of leisure in the very style. The authors seem not in the least haste. They write very much as a country gentleman talks with his friend from town—as if desirous to prolong the rare delights of companionship. A modern author, on the contrary, shows, in his very language, that he is infected with the busy and progressive spirit of the age. He dares not linger by the wayside, but presses on to the conclusion of his task by the most direct way. Prolixity, digression, and elaborate inter-

ludes are not tolerated, unless redeemed by extraordinary talent. Authors and readers, in times when literature was less cultivated, wrote and perused comparatively few books; they, however, made the most of them. Their idiosyncrasies were less overlaid, and the hurry of life did not prevent the exercise and observation of individualities. This free and enjoyable way of writing doubtless leads to tedium, but it is none the less characteristic of humorists, who by nature are apt to harp too constantly on one string. The zest of their works does not depend on the incidents narrated, but on the flavor of the whole composition, on the spirit it exhales, the ingenuity of the expressions, the knowledge of man and nature quaintly revealed, the vein of sentiment, the play of mirth—in a word, the humor it embodies. Such is the indefinable charm of Mackenzie in pathos, of Steele in glimpses of life, of Sydney Smith in wit, and of Sterne in the combination of these elements. The latter has a characteristic defence of this cheerful quality—"Yorick had an invincible dislike and opposition in his nature to gravity —not to gravity as such, for when gravity was wanted, he would be the most grave or serious of mortal men for days and weeks together; but he was an enemy to the affectation of it, and declared open war against it, only as it appeared a cloak for ignorance or for folly; and then, whenever it fell in his way, however sheltered and protected, he seldom gave it much quarter." In the naked temper which a merry heart discovered, he would say there was no danger but to itself, whereas the very essence of gravity was design, and consequently deceit; 'twas a taught trick to gain credit of the world for more sense and knowledge than a man was worth."

Two traits of Hood's humor are thoroughly English, and in a great degree original—the imaginary experiences of creatures

of habit suddenly placed in entirely novel circumstances, and the ludicrous yet natural imitation of familiar letters between individuals of particular vocations. Life in England is so mechanical, and the customs incident to a mercantile society so prevalent, that the very idea of a clerk transformed into a rural economist, or a haberdasher turned sportsman, is diverting. Hood's pictures, drawn from such inventions, are singularly ingenious. Indeed, by reason of his quick sympathies and alert perceptions, he obtained humorous suggestions from his daily walks through the metropolis as well as from the musings of his sick room. Such caricature sketches as the "Tale of a Trumpet" and "Miss Killmansegg and her precious leg," imply great observation as well as vivacious fancy; while "The Schoolmistress Abroad," "The Pugsley Papers," and "Mr. Chubb, a Piscatory Romance," touch off the harmless extravagances of actual life with inimitable zest. A volume of the most exquisite specimens both of humor and pathos, might be compiled from this writer, who left material for at least twenty. Many, however, of his articles are mere *jeux d'esprit*, which he appropriately called Whimsicalities—an order of comic writing that may be justly said to have been invented by him. It is a sad necessity which compels a man of brilliant mind to coin his jokes for bread. True humor is not to be thus forced; and, therefore, Hood had recourse to whims—a lighter and more available kind of artillery. While the abundance of these prove his marvellous industry and the ceaseless activity of his inventive faculty; he furnished, at genial moments, more complete and artistic emanations of his genius, which now survive, and will have a standard and endearing place in modern literature. The range of no poetical mind is more wide than that which equally well conceived the Dream of the Midsummer

Fairies and the lonely grief of the weary Sempstress, and could revive, with equal verisimilitude, the classic associations of the fables of mythology, and depict the incongruous passion of a poor Irish amazon in search of her lost child.

THE GOLD FEVER.

> This yellow slave
> Will knit and break religions; bless the accursed;
> Make the hoar leprosy adored; place thieves
> And give them title, knee and approbation,
> With senators on the bench.
>
> TIMON OF ATHENS.

A POPULAR epithet usually goes nearer the truth than we are apt to imagine. The term "fever" applied to the excitement in regard to California gold, is a tacit recognition of the unhealthy feelings and extravagant projects to which it has given rise. Now that a breathing-spell has occurred both in the discussion of the topic and in the rush of emigration, a glance may be desirable at the philosophy of the subject, and, as enthusiasm cools, the eye of reflection may possibly behold some valuable truth which it requires no exile to discover, no digging to unearth, and no washing to purify.

In the first place, then, this gold fever is not a new disease; on the contrary it is one of the most familiar and well-defined "which flesh is heir to." Neither is a mining district the best place to study its phases or trace its laws. Its diagnosis, like many more complicated disorders, may be learned to the greatest advantage in the French capital. Enter, soon after night-fall, a *maison-de-jeu;* the heaps of Napoleons on the green covered tables, their musical clink when drawn by the little hoe into the pouch of the *banquier*, the pale or wildly-flushed cheeks, intent eyes, and affected nonchalance of the silent groups; the smile of

mockery, the badinage of fear, the cry of desperate joy, the mute gaze of utter hopelessness; the wretched calmness of the resolved suicide as he turns away, the hectic delight of the winner, and especially the brooding, keen, remorseful anxiety of those whose doom is yet suspended—constitute the legitimate and ill-disguised symptoms of the gold fever in all its stages. Let one untouched by the malady, thus contemplate it, for a single hour, by the flashing light of those mysterious *salons*, where the most insidious of human passions developes itself with a subtle and instinctive impressiveness, unequalled by the most vivid dramatic personation, and the spectacle will reveal, at once, the latent horror of the contagion. A young naval officer, when asked what period of his first battle was most appalling, replied, the few hushed moments when they sprinkled the decks with sand, to drink the human blood as yet unshed. Thus is it with the contest for gold. Not in the earnestness of the sanguine miner, or the tranquil industry of the gainful devotee, or the luxury of the millionaire—not in the dawn or the consummation of the pursuit of wealth, but in the premeditated recklessness of the gambler, do we fully see the delirium of the gold fever.

If the perspective of time were not a necessary condition of romance, the present age would be deemed as fertile in the wonderful as any which have preceded it; but this obvious truth, though sometimes acknowledged, is seldom realized. The scientific discoveries, political revolutions, and social phenomena which have occurred within the last quarter of a century, if graphically narrated, and poetically or even philosophically illustrated by as inventive and eloquent genius as has celebrated the reign of Elizabeth, Louis XIV., or Isabella, it would appear that no interval has ever been more crowded

with grand, marvellous, or interesting events. The mere facts of a Pope having originated a liberal European movement, of the Atlantic being crossed in nine days, of the discovery of the electric telegraph, as matters of past history, would strike us with deep surprise; yet they are but a few of the more recent incidents of our own day. Romance has thrown her fairy mantle over the expeditions of Cortez and Raleigh; and, at some distant period, the novelist and historian will find more prolific themes in the consequences which will follow a circumstance that happened a year ago, on the American Fork, a California river, about fifty miles from New Helvetia. A workman, then and there engaged in cutting a mill-sluice, saw many particles glitter in the sunshine at the bottom of his excavation. Upon careful inspection they proved to be gold. Subsequent experiments have shown that this precious metal is intermingled with the soil, in various proportions, over an extent of six hundred miles. The fine dust is found chiefly in the beds of streams and along their borders, and the coarser deposits imbedded in the granite of the adjacent hills. As yet the mining processes have been crude and unskilful; the arrangements of the government for protecting and systematizing the country altogether inadequate, and the means for obtaining correct statistical information but partially reliable.

The American flag was planted in California in July, 1846. Emigration from the United States soon enlivened her enterprising population, whose prior resource had been chiefly the sale of hides, obtained from the hordes of wild cattle. The gold discovery following so rapidly, changed the aspect of things at once; from a gradually improving agricultural and trading settlement, the whole region was transformed into an arena for

all the adventurous spirits and reckless fortune-hunters from the United States, Oregon, and the Sandwich islands.

As early as 1602, a Spanish expedition commenced, with immediate success, the propagation of the Catholic religion in the region now known as California, and it is said that the Jesuits early knew and long kept the secret of the gold mines. Its discovery is attributed to Cabrillo, a Spanish navigator, in 1548, and the upper portion of the country was visited by Sir Francis Drake, twenty years later, who called it New Albion. It soon became a Mexican territory, and the only civilizing agency to which the original inhabitants were long subjected, was that of the missions established at various points. A few Boston merchants sent vessels annually to the coast, and carried on a lucrative trade, exchanging cheap articles of necessity and ornament for hides and tallow. At length the tide of emigration from the thickly populated Atlantic towns, having overspread the large western states, began to set, in casual eddies, towards this distant and partially explored region. Led by the spirit of adventure or the hope of advantageous colonization, companies were formed to traverse the wilderness, where too many of them encountered incredible fatigues and perished by famine, Indian massacres, or exhaustion.

As the trails became more defined, the journey of the emigrants grew less perilous, and the accounts of recent expeditions, though sufficiently unattractive to those wedded to the amenities of metropolitan life, possessed the interest of novelty, and the charm of promise to the enterprising and scientific. Day after day, like the caravans which traverse the Orient, bodies of men, women, and children, with their provisions, household utensils, wagons, oxen, mules and horses, moved

slowly on, encamping in the open air, cooking by the way-side, seeking drink from springs, and fresh sustenance from the game accidentally encountered; exposed to every extreme of weather, now drenched to the skin and now parched with heat; the grass their nightly couch, and the heavens their shelter when no tree was at hand. The freedom of this life, its primitive simplicity of habits, and especially the intimate contact into which it brought the wanderers with nature in her most luxuriant as well as primeval and barren aspects, were the redeeming features of an experience that involved an amount of deprivation, hardship, petty trials, and formidable danger, enough to dishearten all who are uninspired by a strong motive or unsustained by vigor of body and elasticity of spirit.

Patiently onward roamed the emigrants, over prairies bright with exuberant vegetation, through saturated plains into which the groaning wains and floundering oxen hopelessly sank, and across miniature oceans of saline deposits evolving clouds of fine dust at every step. Sometimes a magnificent clump of oaks, firs, pines, or cedars, greeted their eyes, weary with gazing over a vast expanse limited only by distant mountains or the far horizon; now a volcanic *debris*, now a curious fossil skeleton, then a gorgeous and illusive mirage, and again, enormous fungi arrest their progress for a moment. Herds of antelopes or buffaloes, elks, wild horses or cattle, an isolated settler's lodge, an Indian encampment, or a band of returning emigrants, alone give signs of life amid those fresh yet melancholy solitudes. Lofty bluffs, weather-stained and tempest-shaped into similitudes of Egyptian monuments, and cloud-hung with a sublime *chiar' oscuro;* flowers and insects of the most brilliant tints, yet to be baptized into the nomenclature of science, and birds of the gayest plumage and the richest notes, heralding a new realm

for the naturalist, met their view; but from all these attractions, life's stern realities ever and anon withdraw the wanderers. They stopped to bury their dead in the lonely wild, to rest the sick, to let a child be born, or celebrate a wedding; and then went forward, with lingering steps, until the smoke of the evening bivouack curled upward against the stainless firmament. Thus, gradually, and under almost solemn auspices, were the agricultural emigrants to California wont to shape their way landwise. The fertility of the soil, the purity of the atmosphere, and the evenness of the temperature, justified their choice of a home; and the prospect seemed to be that a rich and judicious cultivation would soon alter the whole face of the country, and that it would be populated by a race of Saxon landholders. The gold discovery has wrought a sudden alteration. The land journey is too slow for the restlessness of cupidity. From every city of the Union craft of all kinds are despatched to the Pacific. Climate and soil, the latent sources of national wealth, and in no small degree the mould of national character, cease to invite the settler to a region which has become the prey of the adventurer.

The history of previous speculations of a like character, has been gracefully chronicled by two of our most eminent authors, Irving and Prescott. In the conquests of Mexico and Peru by the latter, and in the former's Life of Columbus, the popular excitement, large emigration, disputes, successes, and misfortunes attendant on new gold discoveries, are portrayed with careful authenticity and classic effect. From these we cannot but derive the impression that the ultimate benefit of such occurrences is incidental, and the individual hazard extreme. In the vast and unrevealed designs of that Providence which modern history now recognises as deeply inwoven through all the great

events of the world, it may be that the magnetic ore, which attracts thousands to the shores of California, is destined to change the balance of civilization, to carry new elements of social action to the Pacific, and thus bring together, under similar influences of policy, education, and religion, the extreme divisions of the earth. There is no end to the visions, which, in the light of a hopeful imagination, may thus be conjured from the gold fever.

Meantime, however, and especially just at present, its operation within our own borders affords no such glowing phase. We have been forcibly reminded of De Tocqueville's declaration, that the ties of home and kindred are essentially loose in a mercantile republic, while observing the extraordinary facility with which men have left accustomed pursuits, local obligations, and family altars, to engage in this distant and hazardous enterprise. Many a gentle being can heartily echo the protest of one of Fletcher's characters as she beholds her cherished hero transformed into a gold adventurer—

> "Had I been old,
> Or blasted in my bud, he might have showed
> Some shadow of dislike; but to prefer
> The lustre of a little trash, Asinoe,
> And the poor glow-worm light of some faint jewels
> Before the light of love and soul of beauty—
> O how it vexes me!"

It is probable that the ore already discovered was brought down by successive freshets from the adjacent mountains; and experience has proved that in such a case the supply may be temporary: this accounts for its immediate abundance at the Placers, where we are told that fifteen thousand dollars' worth was easily procured in a day at the commencement of the

search. Few adventurers consider the other side of the case, or perceive that a very small minority of the gold-seekers derive any compensation for their deprivations. The exorbitant price of labor and articles of daily necessity, the liability to incur dangerous fever and chronic rheumatism, and the utter absence of all that is suggested to an English mind by the word—comfort; the necessary inundation of "landless resolutes," vagabonds, and criminals, to the scene of action, and the consequent insecurity of life and property, are grave offsets to the dazzling prospects which induce so many California pilgrimages. Interested parties continually minister to the excited feelings which the El Dorado stories circulated by the press are alone sufficient to keep alive. Enormous quantities of ardent spirits are carried out in every vessel, as well as weapons of all kinds and ammunition. In a few months, that region will be overstocked with the ordinary staples of trade to such a degree that their price must necessarily fall below the home-market value. At present, the glittering dust is the circulating medium. Instead of paying for a glass of negus with a fip, a pinch of gold-dust is received, sometimes worth eight dollars. Allured by the prevalence of this coveted treasure, garrisons, ships, secure employments, moderate but certain profits, farms, shops, offices, and worst of all, civilized homes, are deserted; and men of all grades and blood, from the half-intoxicated savage to the educated New-Englander, sailors, soldiers, clerks, physicians, clergymen, and naval officers, may be seen arrayed in uncouth India-rubber garments, delving with spade and pickaxe, or carefully gleaning the shining particles from the sand. Meantime the ordinary avocations of the new settlers were wholly abandoned. No harvest fields waved; the click of no mason's trowel broke the slumberous quiet of noontide; the cheering shout of mari-

ners was hushed. Only the sharp-ringing blows of the smith's anvil, forging tools for the miners, informed the spectator that the "gold fever" had smitten down the arm of honest industry.

The political economy view of this subject has been clearly unfolded by the daily press. Writers have shown—what, indeed, it requires but little sagacity and a limited knowledge of history to perceive—that the financial worth of the precious metals diminishes in the exact ratio of their abundance. Among the Peruvians it was as articles of manufacture, in their ornamental and utilitarian significance, that gold and silver were prized; and wherever these ores have existed in great natural deposits, or through productive colonial mines, there industry has languished and national progress been completely stayed. It were easy to draw a parallel between Spain and England, or the United States and South America, in support of this assertion, but it is one of those obvious facts deducible from as obvious principles, which are self-evident. To illustrate the connexion between labor and capital, and distinguish actual from nominal wealth, is the vocation of the political economist; and an American, least of all, requires such lessons, familiar as he is with the substantial prosperity of states destitute of the natural resources of a rich soil and an equable climate, or spontaneous fertility. It hence appears that intelligent enterprise is the most prolific source of wealth, and that moral causes lie at the basis of all enduring good fortune. These moral causes bring us to the individual, as economical ones refer chiefly to social interests, and both originate in natural laws. Infringement of these, in their physiological relations, is the occasion of bodily disease; and it is precisely as true that all social fevers are traceable to a similar violation. Now, one of the most universal, occult, and inexorable of natu-

ral laws, is what may be termed the *indirect method.* Nature does not yield her choicest gifts except, as it were, incidentally. The moment we attempt to wrest her secrets from her, she is mute; but delights to reveal them to some humble follower, who has never profaned her sanctities by any conscious, inquisitorial, or self-seeking intrusion. Wealth is valueless, except as associated with certain gratifications, and these, according to the law in question, are attainable only by indirect means—such as labor, invention, patience, care. There is an inevitable compensatory principle. The process of earning is a necessary element in the process of enjoying money. If inherited, only by munificent charities, art-patronage, liberal enterprise, or generous hospitality, can the possessor reconcile himself to his condition, or win the needful self-respect whereby alone his means bring pleasure.

It is on this account that we have little faith in the gold picked up from its native earth, until it is transferred to the hand of regular industry, as a symbol of the value of a certain amount of labor. Then, like mercy, "it blesses him that gives and him that takes;" for the conditions which render it truly available are fulfilled. Otherwise it is like a stolen badge of honor or a forged passport—a facility, not genuine, authentic, or capable of realizing the good of which it is the illegitimate sign. In a material point of view, it may, indeed, purchase the same amount of commodity, but in a moral and enjoyable way, its efficacy is limited by the absence of that zest only derivable from labor, the consciousness of desert, and the freshness of desire. Through the individual affection of men the species is propagated; through the social instincts arts and science advance; alchemy, a personal quest, led the way to chemistry, a universally benign science; astrology, a delusion encouraged

by superstitious kings, ushered forth those sublime astronomical truths, which guide the mariner on the trackless sea and denude eclipses of terror by exact prophecy. Thus we are forced to serve a general end in prosecuting those which seem altogether limited to self; and it is in proportion to the indirect good achieved by individual pursuit that it is crowned, not perhaps with apparent success, but certainly with absolute satisfaction. Hence the contrast in the destiny of lands and persons enriched by industry and by luck, by enterprise and usury—between Massachusetts and Peru, Antonio and Shylock. Compare the gangs of houseless exiles wading and scraping, in the attitude of the spirit "least erect of all" even in hell, among the rifted gullies of Sacramento, with the manly race that "drag the monsters of the deep from the Pacific to light our tables;" contrast the gold-seeking emigrants to California with the hardy Dutch fur companies, whose pioneer enterprise laid the foundation of New York's commercial greatness! The brave clamberer among the rocky cliffs of the North Sea hears, with a thrill of pleasure at his own daring, the echoes of the gun which has brought to his feet the wild bird whose downy plumage is to minister to the luxury of a distant clime; the shipmaster realizes the indomitable energy of his birth-place, as he discharges, at an East India pier, the cargo of ice quarried from a New England lake; and the diver, as he exultingly drinks in a long draught of upper air, with the pearl which is to deck some fair and regal bosom clutched in his grasp, rejoices in the prize which he has wrested from the sea. Tame, in comparison, are the spoils which require not the alchemy of invention and assiduity to convert them into gold. Acquisitiveness, when the exclusive motive power, dulls the edge of fine enjoyment. To hunt for lucre, through no intervening emprise, no wide-

embracing interest, no exercise of varied faculties and aptitudes, is like gratifying one's alimentative wants alone and gluttonously, in comparison with the wit, the song, and the geniality which makes a dinner of herbs better than a stalled ox; or like the unauthorized love of the orientalist compared to the lingering sweetness of that gained by a "long course of wooing."

We hold it to be an incontrovertible principle in all human affairs, that the spasmodic is not the normal condition, and that health, in the entire significance of the term, is the essential quality, to secure which a wise man will modify all his habits and relations. Taste, opinion, sentiment, have their unhealthy phase, which, if encouraged, may render the very consciousness morbid. Then, in point of fact, we are in a false relation to society, to nature, and to truth. The integrity of our life is broken, and we become either sullen or *distrait*. In a commercial land, the readiest avenue for this disturbing element to gain admittance, is through pecuniary ambition—a very different thing from avarice, and in our view, a passion almost peculiar to mercantile republics. It may be defined as the love of power based on wealth—a kind of substitute for the aristocracy of public service, which gave *prestige* to the leading names of the *noblesse* and the aristocracy of mere birth, like that of the English and Italian nobility. That money is vehemently desired in this country, independent of the physical benefit it affords, has been remarked by all intelligent foreigners. In the Old World it is chiefly prized for the gratifications it will purchase; in the New for the influence that attends it. Hence, besides the mere love of acquisition, society is here beset with a passion for gold as a symbol of power, and this combined feeling is necessarily a self-exaggerated one. To this cause we attribute the rapidity with which the gold-fever has spread. Omitting

those driven by absolute necessity, as a desperate resource, to the valleys of Sacramento, there is a very large class whose real wants had ample provision, who have engaged in this enterprise from a most extravagant, untenable idea of the value of nominal wealth, and the mere symbols of fortune, which is nothing less than an absolute monomania.

One would imagine from the universal eagerness of appreciation manifested in regard to the recent discovery, that there were no other veins to be worked than those of gold. Such an idea is unworthy of an age when literature and art are a common possession, and the philosophy of life is ably discussed. There are veins of iron and granite, of loam and peat, of coal and marble, intersecting this continent, of vastly more importance to the welfare of the people—since they are destined to give reliable employment to thousands, to bring into existence new capital and new labor, and thus increase the only genuine basis of wealth—national industry. It were desirable, also, that those who prattle with so much facility of veins of gold, should take cognisance of those veins which mysteriously nourish their own bodies, and realize, as they count the pulsations that indicate the precarious tenure of human existence, that the "life is more than meat, and the body than raiment." Then, too, is it justifiable, amid such enlightenment and Christianity, to forget the veins of humor and pathos modern genius has so effectively worked, and in exploring whose treasures the desolation even of an impoverished lot may be forgotten? Crabbe and Dickens have a vein of humanity, Wordsworth of meditation, Coleridge of metaphysics, Channing of moral truth, Byron of impassioned perception, Shelley of aërial phantasy, Lamb of delicate wit, Schiller of aspiration, Scott of picturesqueness, and so on through all the mazes of the literature of the century. It is

not the material, but the providence which rules it; it is not the positive gain, but the manner of acquisition; it is truth to individual wants, aims, endowments, and tendencies, that common sense mainly regards in the pursuit of wealth. A bare subsistence, earned according to the idiosyncrasies of one's nature, is better than a fortune gained at their expense. A lover of the sea, with his stern toil and limited wages, a poet giving a finishing touch to the song which only buys salt for his porridge, a scientific mechanician, like Remington, executing his inventions with scarce bread enough for sustenance, are more content than if they were sifting their daily thousands with the gold-diggers of San Francisco. Exquisitely does Ion utter the great truth that this highly sanctioned adaptation is the only pledge of genuine success:—

> "The coarsest reed that trembles in the marsh,
> If Heaven select it for its instrument,
> May shed celestial music on the breeze
> As clearly as the pipe whose virgin gold
> Befits the lip of Phœbus."

THE PROFESSION OF LITERATURE.

Let literature be an honorable augmentation to your arms, not constitute the coat or fill the escutcheon.

COLERIDGE.

OF the wisdom of this counsel I am more and more convinced. The circumstances unfavorable to literature as a profession in this country, are often alluded to with regret. That there is not a more general literary taste among us, is indeed to be deplored, but for the comparative paucity of exclusively literary persons, reflection will afford many consolations. The most cursory observation will convince any one that there is no danger of an intellectual famine from scarcity of books. It has long been a matter of impossibility for the most industrious individual to attend to his regular vocation, and, at the same time, keep pace with the current literature of the day. In truth, it is fairly questionable whether the general mind would not gain a signal advantage if the fecundity of the press were suddenly checked and readers thrown back awhile upon the neglected books of a less showy, but more vigorous period. Let any man of good taste and true sensibility to the charms of genius, deliberately estimate the amount of real originality, valuable ideas, and vital interest which the publications of a single month contain, and he will acknowledge that a little more retrospective reading, and less reading of any kind, would be a blessing. The interests of society are not then likely to suffer if the number of professed authors is diminished as regards the quantity of literature, and I believe it can be demonstrated

that in quality the gain would be infinite. Task-work of all kinds is ungenial, and its product possesses not the warm vitality of truth. This is especially true of literary labor. To be really excellent, it should be spontaneous. If we inspect its annals we shall often find that the living gems of thought have been brought to light less frequently by the professed writer, than by those to whom literature has been a pastime, an occasional rather than a regular and unremitting employment. The fairest laurels, even of the author, have in general been won by those early efforts which were prompted rather by taste than necessity, and before the pen had become the only source of subsistence. In these cases it is one of the most melancholy things in the world to turn from the fresh outpourings of genius, active from fulness of thought, to the cold and forced results of the same mind, prolific only from the drudgery of authorship. There is scarcely a fine writer of our times who has not thus almost destroyed his own enchantment. How few will leave behind them a reputation unmarred by their own indiscreet drafts upon jaded faculties, or vain attempts to pursue a successful vein of invention beyond its natural limits! The most splendid specimens of didactic writing which have appeared in the English language of late years, are in the form of articles in the leading reviews. Most of these are the production of active, political, or professional men, who turn to literature only in the intervals of other and more pressing duties. The best poetry yet produced in this country is by bards who can only woo the Muses when occasionally freed from the labors of office, finance, or politics.

"The true secret of using language well, is to use it from a full mind." And it is because the mind cannot constantly overflow, nor the feelings kindle by mere volition, that the

professed author labors to so little effect. He, on the other hand, whose ideas or emotions drive him to literature as a relief, infuses the interest by which he is inspired into his composition. To him it is no task, but a pleasure; and his readers will find their sympathies awakened, and their thoughts aroused by the very sincerity of the appeal. Burns used to leave the fields for his cottage, to transcribe the effusion with which his fancy was teeming, and Elia wrote his quaint sketches after a long day's toil at the India House. Hence, were there less professional authorship, what writings came to us at all, would come fresh and vigorous from an earnest spirit. They would be the legitimate offspring of a human soul, authentic chronicles of individual experience. They would be alive, and would live like the Pilgrim's Progress, Boswell's Johnson, or King Lear.

Literature is but the record of life. Its professors do but chronicle experience. Their function is important, and may be rendered exalted, but its essential dignity is often overrated. The thought finely expressed in writing, and disseminated by the press, has a more imposing aspect than when it falls casually from the lips, or rises quietly in the mind; but in reality it is the same. As an exclusive form of human development the pursuit of literature often cramps and distorts our nature. Literary men, like the frequenters of the gymnasium, generally enlarge and strengthen one power at the expense of the others. It is extremely difficult to preserve the integrity of the soul when all its energies are devoted to so exacting an occupation. The social character is apt to suffer as life becomes concentrated in mental labor. The process of thinking often becomes a merely selfish exercise. Sympathy is not unfrequently transferred to abstract objects. The real world of suffering and duty

is deserted for one that only exists in an individual's consciousness. The lesser ministries of affection, the minor obligations of humanity, the frank amenities of fellowship are, as it were, absorbed in the solicitous workings of the intellect. To the noblest spirits, literature has been rather a necessary resource than a voluntary pursuit. Physical infirmity, or moral suffering, have driven them from the post of active duty and the sacred privacy of affectionate retirement, to the struggles of authorship. Sometimes, in these cases, we seem to behold the visible agency of Providence. Dante wrote his poem to cheer his exile and punish his persecutors. Milton's blindness opened to his spirit the garden of Eden and the "palace of Eternity." Scott composed his marvellous fictions to improve his estate; and a childhood of pain prepared him for the work, and gave his young mind the leisure to expatiate in the regions of romance. We cannot but regard reverently such instances of the influence of circumstances upon the career of genius. To such men the profession of literature seems to have been ordained. Their examples, however, cannot be cited in favor of the adoption of a literary life on the part of those whose destiny and endowments are wholly different. To such the question is offered for deliberate decision, not previously settled by a power beyond their control. They should consider how important it is to preserve some part of their experience free from the desolation of custom, and how available is literature to this end. Let books be to them as the pleasant faces of companions, and not the symbols of toil. Let the pen be as a wing to lift them occasionally from the earth, not the token of wearisome and hackneyed drudgery. Let the intelligent youth learn to look upon his library as a sweet retirement from common employment; and the gifted woman be satisfied to make her intellectual accom-

plishments a blessing to her household. They will not thus be lost, but impressed on the hearts of her children, and be published to society in their words and deeds.

Talleyrand said a man was a fool to publish a book, because it reveals the extent of his knowledge. Without denying the cold worldly wisdom of such a notion, or its utter inapplicability to genius, does it not convey a noble suggestion? Shall we not reserve somewhat of our reflective experience? Are there no sacred ideas, no special fancies which the common air would profane? A degree of mental privacy is essential to self-respect. Yet one of the latent inducements to literary effort is doubtless that craving for sympathy which belongs to elevated and ardent minds. "Many things," says Montaigne, "which I would not confess to any one in particular, I deliver to the public." Few authors, however, estimated the profession of literature more justly than this ingenious essayist. "Have you known," he asks, "how to meditate and manage your life? Have you known how to compose your manners? You have done a great deal more than he who has composed books." Gifted men have invariably protested against the exclusive reputation which the public attaches to letters. They have felt themselves creatures of "infinite variety," and shrunk from the "golden sorrow" of such fame. Scott was determined that authorship should be his "staff, not his crutch," and sturdily acted out the principle. Gray and Congreve disliked the imputation of being mere men of letters, perhaps not so much from a wider ambition, as from a natural feeling that life was greater than its records, the man than the author. To this idea may in part be traced Byron's pride in swimming, Tasso's sword-practice, and Alfieri's horsemanship. The testimony of Charles Lamb to the evils of professional literary toil, is not less true than impressive. "'Tis

a pretty appendage," he remarks, in a letter to Bernard Barton, "to a situation like yours or mine; but slavery worse than all slavery, to be a bookseller's dependent;—to drudge your brains for pots of ale and breasts of mutton, to change your free thoughts and voluntary numbers for ungracious task-work."

Even Shakspeare abhorred the constant infringement of the soul's privacy implied in a career which appeals only to the multitude:

> "Oh, for my sake do you with fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my harmless deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide,
> *Than public means which public custom breeds.*"

But it is chiefly with regard to the individual that this view of literature demands attention. As a means of acquiring distinction, literary pursuits are, indeed, fast losing their attraction. It has been well said, that not to have written a book is now something to boast of; and it seems to be generally thought that "the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence." It is a very serious question whether a profession so trying to the health and exhausting to the mind as that of writing should be adopted; and unhappily it is an inquiry that usually suggests itself too late to receive a practical negative. Scott is confessedly the grand exception, the one whole and unmarred instance of literary manhood. Even his success was disastrously eclipsed. He wept to find his "occupation gone," and recorded his testimony that social privileges formed his greatest obligation to literature, and that his own nature panted for a less exclusive and more active development. Rare mental gifts and an extraordinary power of fixing the public attention, may

afford sufficient inducements to any man to devote himself to literature. But even in this case, if he has no elevating views to diffuse, no grand truth to advocate, no important principle to unfold, his career must prove essentially selfish. Its absolute utility may well be doubted. At all events there is nothing very exalted in personal sacrifices, the object of which is only to win fame, or make money. A writer of genius who, like Milton, enters on an intellectual crusade under the banner of liberty, is indeed worthy of the most profound reverence.

The martyr to scientific research, the undaunted defender of a great idea, suffer to some purpose, and are entitled to honor. But souls of a more subdued temper are often warped by a life exclusively given to literature. The "daily beauty" of private life, the silent influence of secluded character, fidelity to domestic claims, are not to be lightly invaded. There is a way of doing good in the world, on a small scale, that is scarcely appreciated. A man who educates one child faithfully, may effect a work of greater benevolence than one who has won the name of philanthropist. The love concentred on a family may produce richer fruits than that which embraces the world. Its action is more intense and invisible, but its results may go abroad and leaven the whole mass of a community. And so in intellectual culture, a well-timed conversation, a good letter, a general taste in the arrangements and employment of time, may be more efficient than the life-devotion of the same capabilities to literary effort. When no momentous end is proposed and no remarkable genius enlisted, let the cost of such a course be calmly weighed. Let D'Israeli's "Calamities of Authors" be attentively perused. It is true, a revolution has taken place in the destiny of authors since that heart-rending chronicle was compiled; but human nature has not changed. It is still pain-

ful to a susceptible mind, to receive the shafts of malevolent criticism, or the fulsome praises of undiscriminating friends. It is still wearisome to a modest spirit to live in the eye of the public. The brain is the same delicate organ as it was in the days of Collins and Chatterton. Egotism is still as naturally the offspring of constant self-communion, and an unhealthy self-consciousness as readily induced by long and loving dalliance with one's own ideas. Literary disappointment is as liable to produce malignant criticism as in the time of Dennis, and literary success has diseased the organ of self-esteem as frequently in our day, as when poor Goldsmith wondered at the crowd for finding more attraction in a mountebank than a poet. The grave of Smollet at Leghorn is yet a landmark to those who would live upon popular favor; and the slab of Keats at Rome breathes a touching lesson to the young and susceptible aspirant for literary renown. "The glorious privilege of being independent," continues to be exposed to imminent hazard by the profession of literature. It is true the days of courtly patronage and mercenary dedication are well nigh passed, but public opinion is a more severe master than any king, and the "fawning" for that "thrift" is equally degrading. We have now no Charles II. to blight the hopes of a Cowley, on account of a republican ode, but we have instead a thousand prejudices which a writer must flatter, or forfeit success, and a trivial standard of taste, conformity to which is a Procrustean bed to a manly intellect. We have no Inquisition to threaten a Galileo with the torture for declaring a truth, but we have innumerable worshippers of authority, who hawk at the free soul when it rises on too bold a wing, and would fain alarm it from the empyrean of original inquiry.

Flavius was praised by his tutors as a promising writer, and,

when quite young, published a work which was very generally commended. Its merit consisted, however, more in the industrious research and tact it exhibited, than in novelty of sentiment, or uncommon beauty of style. Its success determined Flavius to abandon a lucrative employment, for a path to which literary ambition allured him. To that passion he at once surrendered his soul. He was then in early manhood, enjoying robust health, and a slight acquaintance revealed many half-developed qualities, full of promise to himself and society. His talents as a writer were only very respectable, his habits those of intense application. He trusted in the power of industry to realize the fruits of rare abilities. There was nothing in his native endowments to warrant the hope that by devotion to literature he could greatly advance any important principle, or lead the way to new truth. Yet he commenced the profession of literature with the ardor of a votary, and the confidence of a genius. It gradually not only employed, but absorbed his energies. The mania of writing took complete possession of the whole man. His day was passed in printing-offices, reviews haunted his slumbers, scraps of verse dropped insensibly from his lips. Every person and thing in life became valuable in his eyes only so far as it ministered to his profession. He pounced upon a man of experience as a repository of facts; he drew upon the reminiscences of old ladies for hints wherefrom to construct a tale; he cultivated the friendship of booksellers for their publications, of authors for their countenance, of editors for their puffs. Even nature, to whose cheerful freedom most men turn for pure enjoyment, was to him a scene of care. He walked amid the fairest landscape in a mood abstracted by ambitious reveries, or peered about to discover a new metaphor in some familiar phenomenon, or gather the materials of a fine

description. To female society he resorted not so much for refreshment and delight, as to kindle a flame of sentiment, in the warmth of which he could strike off some glowing thoughts or new images. Thus all his life was laid under contribution for ideas, and like an intellectual tax-gatherer, Flavius roamed to collect tithes of thought and contributions of wit. These were fused in the crucible of his fevered mind, and appeared in the form of critical essays, sketches, rhymes, and paragraphs. He soon became notorious, and mistook publicity for glory. For this he neglected his meals and his person, acquired habits of selfish reserve, resigned the grace of manner and the charm of friendship. For this he wandered among his kind, ever wrapt in the solitude of reflection. For this he resigned the happiness and improvement of social intercourse. For this sleep fled from his pillow, and buoyancy from his heart. For this he sacrificed mental freedom, cheerfulness, and health. Inordinate ambition, irregular habits of diet and exercise, and an unremitted activity of the brain, soon demolished even the strong constitution of Flavius. He died a victim to literature, in whose annals his name will scarcely appear. To the last moment he grasped his pen, and his death-bed was littered with magazines, uncorrected proofs, and scraps of manuscript. The illusion of his life was an erroneous estimate of the importance of literary labor, and of his own capacity in that sphere. As an occasional means of usefulness, a liberal accomplishment, a refined recreation, literature would have proved a blessing; instead of appropriating for an inadequate end all the vigor and freshness of his being, and consigning him to an early grave.

HAIR.

There seems a life in hair though it be dead.
LEIGH HUNT.

HAIR is an eloquent emblem. It is the mother's pride to dress her child's rich locks; the lover's joy to gaze on the hair-locket of his mistress; the mourner's despair to see the ringlet stir, as if in mockery of death, by the marble cheek of the departed. How the hue of hair is hallowed to the fancy! From the "glossy raven" to the "silver sable," from the "brown in the shadow, and gold in the sun," to the blonde and silken thread, there is a vocabulary of hues appealing to each memory.

The beautiful economy of nature is signally displayed in the human hair. The most simple expedient in the animal frame, the meanest adjunct, as it were, to the figure, yet how effective!

"Hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:

* * * * * *

She, as a veil, down to the slender waist,
Her unadorned tresses wore,
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implies
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay."

In this passage, the blind bard of Paradise has interpreted the natural language of woman's hair before the artifices of fashion had marred its natural grace. Whoever has attentively perused one of the pictures of the old masters, where a female figure is represented, must have perceived, perhaps unconsciously, that the long flexible ringlets conveyed an impression to the mind of dependence. The short, tight curls of a gladiatorial statue, on the contrary, give the idea of self-command and unyielding will. There is a poetical charm in the unshorn tresses of a beautiful woman, which Milton has not exaggerated. I have seldom received a more sad conviction of the bitterness of poverty, than was conveyed by the story of a lovely girl in one of the continental towns, who was obliged to sell her hair for bread. She was of humble parentage, but nature had adorned her head with the rarest perfection. Her luxuriant and glowing ringlets constituted the pride of her heart. She rejoiced in this distinction as the redeeming point of her destiny. Often would a blush of pleasure suffuse her cheek as she caught a stranger's eye regarding them with admiration, when at her lowly toil. The homeliness of her garb, and the poverty of her condition, were relieved by this native adornment. It is wonderful to what slight tokens the self-respect of poor mortals will cling, and how the very maintenance of virtue often depends upon some frail association. A strain of music, glimpses of a remembered countenance, a dream, a word, will often annihilate a vile intention, or unseal the fountain of the heart. A palm tree in England drew tears from an Eastern wanderer; and the native wisdom of Jeanie Deans led her to make her first visit to the Duke of Argyle, arrayed in a plaid, knowing his honor's heart "would warm to the tartan." And thus to the simple-hearted maiden her rich and flowing hair was a crown of glory

—the only circumstance that elevated her in her own estimation. And when the iron necessity of want came upon her, and she was a homeless orphan—when everything had been parted with, and all appeals to compassion had failed, the spirit of the poor creature yielded to hunger, and she sold her hair. Before this sacrifice, she had resisted, with the heroism of innocence, the temptation to purchase food at the expense of honor. But when the wants of nature were appeased, and she went forth shorn of her cherished ornament, the consciousness of her loss induced despair, and she resigned herself hopelessly to a career of infamy.

Abundant hair is said to be indicative of strength, and fine hair, of susceptibility. In the hair are written the stern lessons of life. It falls away from the head of sickness, and the brows of the thoughtful. The bright lot of childhood is traced in its golden threads, the free buoyancy of youth is indicated by its wild luxuriance; the throe of anguish, the touch of age, entwine it with a silver tissue; and intensity of spirit will there anticipate the snows of time. The hair of Columbus was white at thirty; and before that period, Shelley's dark waving curls were dashed with snow. In the account of the execution of the unfortunate Mary, the last touch of pathos is given to the scene when it is stated that as the executioner held up the severed head, it was perceived that the auburn locks were thickly strewn with grey.

Associations of sentiment attach strongly to the hair. Around it is wreathed the laurel garland of fame. Amid it tremble the flowers of a bridal. Putting up the hair is the signal of womanhood. The Andalusian women always wear roses in their glossy black hair. The barbarous practice of scalping, doubtless originated in a savage idea of desecrating the temple of the soul, as

well as of gathering trophies of victory. The head is shaven by the monks in token of humility, and the stationary civilization of the Chinese is indicated by no custom more strikingly than that of wearing only a single queue, the very acme of the unpicturesque. There were few more characteristic indications of a highly artificial state of society than the absurd style of dressing the head once so fashionable. Even at the present day, no part of female costume betrays individual taste more clearly than the style in which the hair is worn. To tear the hair is a true expression of despair, and the patriarchal ceremony of scattering ashes on the head, was the deepest sign of sorrow. How much the desolate grandeur of the scene on the heath, in Lear, is augmented by his "white flakes" that "challenge pity," and what a picture we have of Bassanio's love, when he says—

> "Her sunny locks
> Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
> Which makes her seat at Belmont, Colchos strand,
> And many Jasons come in quest of her."

The women at the siege of Messina wrought their hair into bow-strings for the archers, and on a similar occasion in the Spanish wars, the females of a small garrison bound their hair under the chin, to appear like beard, and arranging themselves on the ramparts, induced the enemy to surrender.

Sampson's hair was singularly associated with his misfortunes, and the abundant locks of Absalom wrought the downfall of his pride. It is often a net to entrap the affections. The hair speaks to the heart. Laura's flying tresses haunted Petrarch's fancy:

> "Qual Ninfa in fonti, in selve, mai qual Dea
> Chiome d' oro si fino a l'aura sciolse?"

That the hair may figure to advantage in literature, the "Rape of the Lock" is an immortal proof. The Puritans cut it short, and the Cavaliers wore it luxuriantly. Human vanity displays itself nowhere more conspicuously than in the arrangement of the hair. When Benedict enumerates the qualifications required in a wife, he says in conclusion—"her hair shall be of what color it please God;"—alluding to the common custom of dyeing the hair. Bassanio, when moralizing on the caskets, utters a satire upon false hair:

> "So are those crisped, snaky, golden locks,
> Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
> Upon supposed fairness, often known
> To be the dowry of a second head,
> The scull that bred them in the sepulchre."

Among the beautiful touches, alike true to nature and poetry, in Talfourd's Ion, is the language of the dying Adrastus to his newly-discovered son:—

> "I am growing weak,
> And my eyes dazzle; let me rest my hands
> Ere they have lost their feeling, on thy head.
> Lo! Lo! thy hair is glossy to the touch,
> As when I last enwreathed its tiny curl
> About my finger."

It is the surviving memorial of our physical existence:

> "It is the gentlest, yet the strongest thread
> Of our frail plant—a blossom from the tree,
> Surviving the proud trunk; as if it said,
> Patience and gentleness is power. In me
> Behold affectionate eternity."

D'Israeli paints Contarini Fleming, the creature of passion,

after his wife's death, as clipping off her long tresses, twining them about his neck, and springing from a precipice. Miss Porter makes Helen Mar embroider into the banner of Wallace, the ensanguined hair of his murdered Marion. Goldsmith's coffin was opened to obtain some of his hair for a fair admirer, and there is a striking anecdote of a man who was prevented from declaring love to his friend's betrothed, by recognising on the hand he had clasped, a ring, containing the hair of his rival. With what a pathetic expressiveness does the "Cenci" conclude:

Beatrice. "Give yourself no unnecessary pain,
My dear Lord Cardinal. Here, mother, tie
My girdle for me, and bind up my hair
In any simple knot; ay, that does well.
And yours, I see, is coming down. *How often*
Have we done this for one another! and now
We shall not do it any more. My hood!
We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well."

The dialogue between King John and Constance is very significant:—

King Philip. "Bind up those tresses. Oh, what love I note
In the fair multitude of those her hairs!
Where, but by chance, a silver dross hath fallen,
Even to that dross ten thousand wiry friends
Do glue themselves in sociable grief;
Like true, inseparable, faithful loves,
Sticking together in calamity."

Constance. "To England if you will."

King Philip. "Bind up your hairs."

Constance. "Yes, that I will and wherefore will I do it?
I tore them from their bonds; and cried aloud,

Oh, that these hands could so redeem my son,
As they have given these hairs their liberty!
But now I envy at their liberty,
And will again commit them to their bonds,
Because my poor child is a prisoner."

A PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION.

> It seems to me
> As if in this poor picture there were still
> Something not wholly so contemptible;—
> Not color only—no—nor finishing,—
> Nor play of night and shade,—but something, too,
> Of *solemn* and *sublime!*
>
> OEHLENSCHLAGER.

After more than a week's disappearance, the sun broke forth on the fourth of March. It was the Sabbath, and the ceremonies that usher in a new president had been deferred until the following morning. By many the cheering alteration in the weather was hailed as a felicitous augury; and not a few hearts responded to the chapter of the day, among the crowded audience that engaged in the religious services at St. John's: "For thou shalt prevent him with the blessings of goodness; and shalt set a crown of pure gold upon his head. And why? because the king putteth his trust in the Lord; and in the mercy of the Most High he shall not miscarry."

Some poet has declared that "change is the life of nature;" one would imagine it was also essential to the vitality of republics. If there be, as the advocates of free institutions maintain, no position more enviable than that of the elected head of a great nation, there is none which less justifies elation of feeling. The tenure is limited, and its enduring distinction only results from personal fidelity. To be "clear in this great office" is the test of its glory. The constitution prohibits a long sway; the contests of party give rise to inevitable

difficulties, and the responsibility of the station, when sincerely felt, checks the exultation of success. The momentous principles at issue throughout the world and involved in the grand experiment of popular rule, of which this country is the arena, render the administration of its government more widely influential than that of any dynasty on earth; and this consideration, added to the intrinsic bearing of the course pursued on the honor and welfare of her people, is enough to solemnize the advent of a new executive and cabinet.

Washington cannot be termed a "Mecca of the mind," as Halleck calls the grave of Burns; but at every transition epoch in our annals, it is the goal of innumerable pilgrims. They come from all quarters of the continent, inspired by varied motives,—those of selfish aggrandizement, liberal curiosity, patriotic sentiment, the magnetism of fashion, and the hope of enjoyment. A kind of serious carnival ensues; speculation is rife; ambition plumes her wings; policy sharpens its wits; beauty opens her caskets of jewels; and the honest pride of citizenship revives. Expectancy vague, yet ardent, is quickened. Opinion finds a response in events; the past is decently buried; and over the future hangs the iris of hope evoked from the subsiding tide of faction. The occasion, when justly appreciated, eloquently explains these signs of the times; and the disproportion of the scene and the symbols, to an imaginative and thoughtful observer, heightens their moral significance.

It is a singular fact, that the only city in the United States planned with reference to extensive growth, is the only one which has never reached its anticipated bounds. The broad avenues, scattered and inadequate dwellings, and lonely thoroughfares of Washington, though cheerless to the eye, are suggestive to the imagination. An aspect so incongruous as is

here presented,—the blending of village and metropolis, of splendid equipages and comfortless streets, of vast capabilities and inelegant utility—the noble Capitol and the straggling houses, plain citizens grouped around inn doors, public edifices of substantial architecture and a frame building erected for a national ball—all indicate the unfulfilled destinies, the utilitarian instincts, and at the same time the boundless promise of the republic. All that meets the gaze in Washington, except the Capitol and the Departments, seems temporary. The city appears like the site of an encampment—as if it were adapted more for a bivouack than a home. Stone ramparts and grated palaces immediately announce to the traveller abroad, an ancient seat of power; here everything whispers of "brief authority," and proclaims that the officials of every grade are, for the time being, only servants of the people.

Some fine copies of Claude gave a mellow warmth to the parlor of the friend with whom I sojourned; and the bare walls of the East Room of the Presidential mansion looked more desolate from the contrast. They should be adorned with national pictures. With such painters as we now boast, this would be an object of easy achievement. It is to be regretted that Washington was ever incorporated as a municipal town; as the property of the country it might have been filled with handsome residences for ambassadors, heads of departments, and other officials, at the expense of government; and it would thus have become a compact and picturesque metropolis. As it is, the houses tremble from roof to cellar beneath the gay steps of the dancers; we emerge from lighted rooms glowing with "fair women and brave men," into mud and darkness; hacks are indispensable, and a clean promenade a rare luxury. It is one of the striking peculiarities of America, that her capital,

which, in every other land, is the centre of refinement and external luxury, is the least significant, of all her cities, of the state of civilization. Yet, here are gathered the trophies of mechanical skill; here are breathed the noblest strains of eloquence; here originate the laws; and here annually congregate the wisdom and beauty of the land. To an ardent republican, however, all this betokens the triumph of his favorite principles. He will regard it as a proof that the interests of office are secondary to those of general prosperity, and that its agents and locality are not suffered to absorb the benefits designed for the whole people.

In the National Institution, like nearly all of our scientific and literary establishments, as yet in embryo,—sea quadrupeds from the Arctic Zone, birds of rare plumage, the coat in which Jackson fought at New Orleans, the rifle of an Indian chief, plants, fossils, shells and corals, mummies, trophies, busts and relics, typify inadequately natural science and bold adventure. Cruikshank might discover new hints for ungraceful attitudes in a hall consecrated by the triumphs of rhetoric; and refined minds learn to hate anew the coarseness and bigotry of partisans, and philosophers the narrowness of a statesmanship acquired in the practice of venal casuistry—where the most generous and profound reasoning has often thrown new light on questions of vital importance to humanity. The foundation of the long-delayed monument to him of whom it has been so admirably said, that "providence had made him childless that his country might call him father;"—the slowly-rising walls of the Smithsonian Institute, the vacant panels of the Rotunda, the sculptured deformities on the eastern front of the Capitol, and the very coin, freshly minted from California gold—awaken that painful sense of the incomplete, or that almost

perplexing consciousness of the new, the progressive, and the unattained, which is peculiar to our country.

It is indeed wonderful to contrast our immense territory with the seat of government, and with the ceremonial and magnificence of the most petty court in Europe fresh in the memory, to note the simplicity of our political arrangements. The richly caparisoned steeds and gaudy footmen, the splendid uniform of the soldiery, the line of thronged antechambers, the formal announcements and prescribed costume that render those scenes memorable to a transatlantic spectator, are all wanting here. When we reflect upon the idea in the abstract, there is a sublimity in this apparant superiority to external blandishments as emblems of authority. Patriotism, thus recognised, is like religion when cherished as a sentiment. The feeling seems adequate to its own realization, independent of form, as if the essential greatness of free institutions obviated the necessity for any outward demonstration of rule. It is a lesson both for the conservative and the radical of the old world, to witness such a scene as was presented at the ex-President's final levee. Let us remember that, in three days, the highest office in the gift of the people is to be resigned; that the lady who, with such dignified urbanity, receives the salutations of the throng, is dispensing her graceful hospitalities for the last time; that hundreds of hearts, in that vast assembly, are thirsting for the emoluments and distinctions of office;—and then contemplate the order, propriety, self-respect, and good feeling with which greetings are exchanged! Observe, too, the "infinite variety" of classes, dress, manners, and character, and where else, on the face of the earth, could such elements be brought together without an array of physical force to subdue and regulate them? Yet group follows group, the heiress in

her silks and diamonds, hard pressed by the servant-maid in calico, the snowy cap of an old Quaker lady brushed by the gold epaulette of a naval hero, and the cold but well-defined profile of one of the Boston aristocracy relieved against the bronzed cheek of a gigantic Chippewa! The attenuated and keen, yet genial physiognomy of the editor of the Union is in juxtaposition with the ear of one of his talented opponents, whose smile proves that their intercourse is jocose. The unsuccessful candidate for the occupancy of this very dwelling is laughing with a member of the triumphant party; a half-civilized Texian is in conclave with the accomplished New England Speaker; the high brow of a judge of the Supreme Court is benignly turned upon the sparkling face of a little country belle; and one of the wounded colonels of Monterey is detailing the fight to a pale but intent artist. Here comes the eloquent defender of the Constitution, of whom Carlyle said that he was the only man whose appearance ever realized to him the idea of a great statesman. Calhoun, with his mass of iron-grey hair and his nervous figure, is shaking hands with Duff Green, their two heads, in the light of the chandelier, reminding us of Salvator's conspiracy of Catiline. There stands the venerable Mrs. Madison, like one of Stuart's ladies reanimated from the canvas. To be appreciated, however, she should be seen in her own apartment, where the portraits of the departed presidents, the scanty and plain furniture, and the wood-fire harmonize with the associations of other days. Farmers with huge paws, sailors with a rolling gait, the sleek adventurer, the bar-room politician, the mercurial southern representative, the calm and portly senator, the eager office-seeker and the philosophic idler;—faces lowering with vulgar obtuseness, or kindled by cultivated sympathies, heads massive with thought, or oscillating

with vanity, make up a human panorama which no limner can adequately reflect. And if we seek to define the motley social characteristics, imagination is equally baffled; for, although political aspirations and fraternity, and "the insolence of office" form the basis,—the variety of talent and disposition thus associated, necessarily create an accessible, frank, and universal tone, which renders society here more free of conventional drawbacks, and more inciting to vivacious intercourse than can be found elsewhere in the land.

How recent, too, are all memories compared with those which haunt the pilgrim at other shrines! A morning's walk may bring him to the spot where the gallant Decatur fell; he may think of the British invasion on the shores of the Potomac, or give a day to a visit to Mount Vernon, where the ashes of the stainless chief repose. The convent at Georgetown may possibly awaken an affecting reminiscence, and Pennsylvania Avenue recal the characteristic anecdote of John Randolph, when he said to an acquaintance who there overtook him, and complained that it was difficult to keep up with him—"Sir, I will increase that difficulty"—striding on at a quickened pace. The Congressional burying-ground has cherished memorials; and beneath yonder lofty dome, within a few months, a venerable statesman died the death of Chatham. The oratory of Pinkney, Wirt, Clay, and a host of others, hallows the scene; but, with singular pertinacity, it ever breathes of the immediate, which De Tocqueville truly says is the natural language of Democracy. Yet how impressive, at certain exigencies, is that language! Now that scarcely a country of Europe owns genuine tranquillity, when every popular movement is fraught with terror, and propriety and domestic life seem at the mercy of revolutionary excitement, there arrives here a family from the extreme South,

in manners, dress, and appearance, in no degree superior to the mass,—unpretending, simple, kindly—without any escort but that of friends and citizens, receiving homage in the limited apartments of a hotel, and called from their distant farm by the popular suffrage. Now and then a crowd in the entries, or a shout in the street, the attendance of a committee, or the flight of a rocket, the display of the national banner, or a knot of earnest talkers, may betray the occurrence of something more than common. Otherwise the stranger would perceive no inkling of a political advent. The usual avocations of life go on without interruption. Not an element of society is disturbed. Anxiety, doubt, exultation, are equally subdued; and, though under this apparent quietude we know there is heaving a deep tide of individual ambition, curiosity, joy, and disappointment, the surface is almost unruffled. One accustomed to the etiquette and parade by which less secure authority is retained and transmitted, and, at the same time, cognisant of the alternations thus unostentatiously realized, must view the circumstances with incredulous wonder.

I was seated in the public room awaiting a friend upon whom I had made a morning call, when an honest-looking man with grey hair, in a suit of blue a little worn and unfashionably cut, walked in with four companions. The latter placed themselves respectfully about him, and one, with a parchment scroll in his hand, in emphatic, yet courteous terms, and with a graceful elocution, announced to him his election to the chief magistracy of the Union,—spoke of the hard-fought battles which had endeared him to his country, the confidence thus awakened in the people, and the freedom and discrimination of their choice. The old man listened with downcast eyes, a thoughtful and self-possessed mien, and when the address ended and the certi-

ficate was received, read his answer in a tremulous but clear voice, and with a hesitancy indicating how little he was accustomed to express his sentiments in words. He spoke of the greatness of the honor conferred, of his deep sense of inadequacy, his solemn determination to be faithful to the duties of the office, to the requisitions of the constitution, and the example of Washington. The ceremony over, he interchanged a few natural observations with those around, returned the cordial grasp of such as were introduced, and then retired with the avowed intention of visiting the present incumbent, whom, in a few days, he was to supersede. In the course of three years this man had become known to the world by the integrity and valor displayed in a war declared by the government he served, and, if report does not err, undertaken against his own convictions and sympathies. His troops manifested somewhat the feeling towards him which Frederic of Prussia inspired. With the trust and the gratitude naturally inspired by his services, the nation elected him President of the United States; and he had at the appointed time come to the Capitol to be inducted into office. Such is the explanation of all these informal phenomena; thus simple is it possible for the mechanism of government to be!

For one inclined to carp at the inefficiency of details and the unimpressive in outward feature, the Inauguration was a scene prolific in material for humorous complaint; but viewed by the eye of reflection, it abounded in the moral sublime. There is no modern public structure with a site so commanding as that of the American Capitol, if we except the monastery of La Superga at Turin; and although the panorama visible from the former is meagre in all that relates to grandeur in scenery and art, it is extensive and characteristic. The widely-scattered

buildings, the winding Potomac, and the broad fields lost in the distance, reposed beneath a cloudy sky; but the neutral tints thus yielded, allowed the gaze to wander with freedom and rest undazzled on the prospect. There was something too in the grey atmosphere now and then flecked with snow, that was adapted to the thoughtful mind busy with an occasion that suggested grave as well as happy ideas. Along the steps and alleys of the surrounding grounds, on the esplanade and the balconies, clustered an eager multitude, the bright hues of the female costumes giving a cheerful aspect to the sombre groups that stood in quiet conversation, or roamed to and fro awaiting the procession. At length it was seen coming up the avenue below. A few volunteer corps formed the only escort. As it approached, the crowd gathered densely around the stage erected at the eastern point. The colossal statue of Washington rose in the far background; and immediately before the spectators was the elegant façade. Scarcely half an hour elapsed, when the judges in their robes, the diplomatic corps in their uniforms, the senators, and numerous officers of the army and navy, appeared; and on the sofa, at the edge of the platform, were seated the newly elected heads of the republic. The Chief Magistrate looked the impersonation of that large and sterling middle class that form the strength and the credit of the United States; he was the image of a benign and patriotic country gentleman; and read the noble pledges of his Inaugural with modest self-possession. The oath was then administered and uttered with an air of reverence, and sealed by a kiss upon the very Bible with which Washington was sworn. The President instantly received the congratulations of the Ex-President and the distinguished personages in his vicinity; and then advanced and bowed to the vast assembly. Shout after shout rent the

air; peal after peal of cannon echoed from the hill; the multitude dispersed on every side without tumult; and accompanied the carriage of their new Executive with cheers. The bands played their liveliest airs. Wide to the breeze fluttered the star-spangled banner. Fair hands waved handkerchiefs from every window; and thus the cavalcade passed on to the White House. There, entrenched behind a slender barricade of chairs, to avoid the pressure of the throng, stood the venerable man, while before him, in an almost endless file, moved the people to welcome him to the home his integrity and valor had won. About a twelvemonth since the Parisian populace broke into the Tuileries; but they wandered through the gorgeous apartments with a kind of savage wonder, and to destroy the luxurious insignia of royal authority; clowns and workmen, the poor and the rude, as well as the gentle and the wealthy, composed the mass that overran the Presidential abode; yet a sense of mutual relation and individual privilege, subdued to courtesy the most uncultivated.

Thus direct, unostentatious, and kindly is the popular recognition of the transit of power, with no intermediate authority to control, no pageantry to beguile, and no exhibition of force to awe the spectators. The reason is obvious—all participate in the interests of the occasion; and each, however humble, may claim a share in the glory. The principles of the constitution chasten all the excitable elements of popular will. The instant the successful candidate is invested with the chief magistracy, partisan weapons are laid aside; and, as the head of the nation, universal respect is awarded the President. Such are the redeeming features of our political system, and the noble episodes in the ceaseless struggle for power that revive hallowed memories and patriotic delight.

The Inauguration Ball, as a social demonstration, was an appropriate *finale*. Between three and four thousand people of both sexes, of every class, from all parts of the land, assembled in an immense saloon erected for the purpose. Members of the diplomatic corps and naval and military officers, by their rich dress, gave variety to the scene. From the stage at the head of the room, the view was magnificent when the President appeared. The mass opened to the right and left to allow him to pass freely; a sea of heads swayed to and fro; the band played exhilarating martial airs; jewels sparkled, murmurs of applause rose and fell, smiles beamed, cheers resounded, and the crowd re-united like a swelling flood, as the unassuming object of all this festivity moved slowly on, with a meek, yet gratified air. When he reached the elevated platform he was received by a group of fair women, and men of noble aspect; he stood among them in the simple dignity of a faithful citizen soldier. The dance was resumed; and the eye fell on a vast and brilliant throng, whose courteous hilarity afforded a hopeful presage to every generous heart.

THE WEATHER.

——— these are counsellors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
As You Like It.

I HAVE just parted with one of those insensible beings who profess perfect independence of the weather,—a class, one would think, by their manner of treating this popular topic, differently organized from the majority of mankind. It is really provoking to remark the complacency with which they declare that the atmospheric vicissitudes affect them not, that they are too busy to note the course of the wind, and that half the time they know not whether it rains or shines; as if it were a fit subject for congratulation—this unnatural insusceptibility to what human beings should, from their very constitution, consciously feel. Much pleasure do these weather-despisers lose. It is true, they suffer not the throe; but, be it remembered, they enjoy not the thrill. Welcome are they to their much vaunted indifference to the state of the elements. Better to suffer somewhat, and even fancifully, from the weather, than to be wrapt up in a mantle of unconcern—to walk forth regardless of the temperature, and without any more interest in the existent face of the heavens, than if they were changeless and stony, like the mood of such spirits. This independence "argues an insensibility." A hopeful token, in truth, is a just susceptibility to the weather. There is reason in its universality, as a subject of discussion; there is a real benefit in being alive to its influences. Dr. Johnson indeed, with characteristic hardihood, boasted of his

immunity from "skyey influences;" but Milton confesses that his poetical vein flowed only between the autumnal and vernal equinox. Thomson declared his muse was most docile in the fall; and Byron always felt most religiously disposed on a sunny day. Hear the stout Ayrshire ploughman—

> "How stan' you this blae eastlin wind,
> That's like to blaw a body blind?
> For me my faculties are frozen."

In Naples, they have a saying, when any literary production is very bad, that it was written during a *sirocco*.

The air and sky are a common heritage—they greet all the living impartially; and, while the changes of all things else affect only certain classes and individuals, their variations influence us all. It is well that there is thus a theme of universal sympathy, about which men, as such, can exchange opinions. The weather is essentially a republican subject; and of all topics, whereby to get over the awkwardness of a first interview, it is decidedly the most convenient. What idea would answer to begin a colloquy with, had we not the weather? If the elements were as fixed, or as regular in their changes, as the earth, what an available starting point in conversation should we be deprived of! After being introduced to an individual of whom we know nothing, what could we find to talk about, were this elemental theme not ever-present? To speak of literature or music, without knowing the taste of our new acquaintance, might prove a damper; to begin chatting about other people, might betray us into scandalising the kindred of our auditor; but to allude enthusiastically to the beauty of the evening, or sympathetically to its coldness, would, in all probability, advance us at once far on the pleasant track of sociability. Besides it is altogether so

natural and human to talk about the weather—to tell how we feel under its prevailing influence—and to listen, with profound interest, to the details our companion may give as to its effect on him. In this way we glide, with transcendent ease, into a sympathizing vein; glimpses of mutual character are incidentally afforded, and then the way to more familiar communion lies clear and open. Let the conceited non-observers of the weather, who are liable to find themselves at a non-plus in conversation, consider the remarkable adaptation of the theme; and for this, if for no better reason, hasten to excite their lukewarm zeal as amateur meteorologists.

Weather-wisdom is a consoling acquirement. I have often re-learned the lesson of human equality, in observing the complacency of an honest tar, as he interpreted the signs of the sky to some accomplished veteran in book lore;—the poor sailor, only matriculated by some marine witchery on crossing the line for the first time—and who only graduated, after some fierce whaling adventure, from cabin-boy to seaman—thenceforth witless of farther degrees—expounding to the attentive university-man, a chapter of his knowledge in the ways of the wind, with as much zest as his hearer ever cleared up a puzzling passage in the Georgics to a group of wondering striplings. Such a scene, not seldom witnessed by the voyager, evinces what a comfortable device is weather-wisdom. Admitting it is the illusive thing many deem it, what a pleasant peg it affords some people to hang a little self-sustaining pride upon! To those who have not wit enough to comprehend the abstract sciences,—to those who regard the beauties of literature as mysteries, and who can make nothing of political economy—what a ready alternative is weather-wisdom! It requires little sense to keep a journal of the dates of snow storms, or to talk,

with seeming sagacity, of the prospects of the season. And what a benevolent provision is this of nature's—that such as are bereft of more recondite lore, can yet nourish self-respect on their notable attainments in weather-wisdom!

But these are only secondary evidences of our obligations to the weather; insensibly do its variations gratify our love of novelty. Every day is new—if not from change of circumstances, from change of weather. How tame might not be our feelings, if sameness was a law of the elements! It is no inconsiderable pastime to note, on every successive morning, a new condition of the physical world; and pitiable, we repeat, is he who finds no refreshment in the shifting scene—to whose eye all aspects of external nature are alike; then, be assured, some deep grief has overshadowed the soul, or some physical infirmity palsied the sense.

There is something morbid in those who are insensible to the weather, as well as in such as are nervously alive to its every minute alteration. It is a beautiful indication of humanity to habitually take cognisance of these subtle agencies that surround us—to regard them as ministrants intimately associated with human weal. I once stood amid the ruins of an ancient amphitheatre with a man of deep social sympathies; we spoke of the myriads who once thronged the now silent spot. "We have reason to believe," said he, "that wherever they are, they are *together;* what a happy idea, that even a dismal fate may be meliorated by sympathy!" And we that now throng a living temple—would it not be an anomaly if we did not sympathize under the operation of universal laws? There is truth to human nature in Hamlet's allusion to the weather, even when awaiting his father's ghost.

Our interest in the weather is not altogether direct. Not

alone to our individual senses does it appeal. Human hopes sway in every breeze. Destiny sometimes seems dependent upon the elements. How many anxious beings are noting the wayward winds when their loved ones are upon the waters; how many tearful eyes are directed to the sky when the cherished invalid is exposed to its varying phases! Property and life, success and love, are too often and too nearly associated with the weather, to permit even the hardy and the stern to boast perfect immunity from its influences. And we wonder not that the ancients deified and invoked the agents of such mighty revolutions. Invisibly, and with a scarcely perceptible increase, the new wind arises; but on its unseen wings float—how many human interests! It bears to the worn and watching tidings of the absent; it wafts to the unthinking breast the seeds of a fell disease; it awakens hymns among the light foliage, and refreshes the care-shadowed brow:—odors and music, gladness and grief, life and death, are borne with silence and certainty to their destined ends. And so with the sunshine and the storm, the summer shower and the noontide heat—they have voices many and impressive, and fulfil a thousand noiseless and subtle missions with promptitude.

We are told that at one period in the ancient history of medicine, but two kinds of disease were recognised, resulting from the contracted and relaxed state of the pores. Doubtless this system originated in the observation of the effects of atmospheric changes upon the skin. Some individuals feel the weather chiefly through this medium; some are made aware of its variations by the sensations they excite in the region of the lungs or stomach; and to others the temples or thorax are as a perpetual barometer. By the peculiar sensibility of some part of their bodies, all are, in a greater or less degree,

physically susceptible to the weather; and through whatever portal the unbidden guest enters, the nervous sense is soon aware of its presence. And thus, the universal agent, the spirit of the elements, insinuates itself into a higher domain. Our mental moods are, more or less, affected; and when the temperament is poetical, the weather, like all things else, abounds with under-currents of influence and mystic echoes to its common language of which the multitude are scarcely conscious.

The weather is an impressive time-keeper. To many it is the most regulating of dials. Not only does it serve to mark the flight, but to control the appropriation of time. The dreamy mood, induced by a warm, cloudy day, inclines us to visit ruins. The blitheness excited by a cold, clear morning, suggests a rapid promenade. When the night-wind sighs dismally, our fancies rove through the world of dark romance. A winter twilight makes us realize "how transitory are human flowers;" and the same season in mid-summer quickens the idea of being into a sense of immortality. All the world over, mild and moonlight evenings are sacred to young love. Old Walton wisely invokes a wet evening for the perusal of his discourse; and,

> "'Tis heaven to lounge upon a couch, said Gray,
> And read new novels *through a rainy day*."

The poets from first to last, in things human and scientific, are, after all, the best philosophers. How universally have they taken cognisance of, and chronicled the elements; and how appropriately adapted them to the circumstances of their heroes and heroines. How feelingly they speak of the weather! What observant, particular, and sensitive meteorologists are they all! How graphic is Byron's description of a London

daybreak, and how sweetly does Mrs. Hemans extol the magic of a sunbeam! What influential, aye, and metaphysical storms, dog-days, and spring mornings, are those immortalized in the annals of every celebrated bard. In truth, poets seem intuitively weather-wise.

The weather is eloquently symbolical. It is a perennial fountain of metaphors. The clouds that fly over the star-gemmed sky, typify the exhalations of earth, which, ever and anon, shade the spirit in its pilgrimage. The wreaths of vapor circling on the gentle breeze, and made rosy and radiant by the sun-light, present an apt similitude of the rise, expansion, and glow of the enthusiast's visions. An icy footpath preaches a homily on mortal instability to the pedestrian, and a deep azure sky is a pure symbol of peace to the gifted eye. The moonlight reposing on snow has been fitly made to illustrate memory; and the dew sparkling in the sun, is a bright emblem of youth, as its vanishing is of decay; yet happy the being, whose consciousness is so lost in the blest intensity of the elements within him, as to be unconscious of those around him; for the glow of human enthusiasm is more beautiful than the flush of the most magnificent sunset.

MANNER.

Oh form!
How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,
Wrench awe from fools, and tie the wisest souls
To thy false seeming!

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

WHEN the fluid particles composing the primeval earth settled into consistent masses, an unbroken, uniform plain was not the result; but everywhere, form, color, and density indicated the various species of matter. Verdure crept over the rich loam, long tables of sand marked the limits of the sea, and rocks of every hue stood forth from the hills. Form of aspect and movement became a law of creation. Even the unstable elements obeyed it. The waters projected themselves into billows, currents, and fountains, and the aeriform waves of the "upper deep" were poured forth in as certain developments. To everything a manner was awarded, by which it was to be recognised, and through which it was to be studied. Another world was then called into being,—a universe of thought, sentiment, fancy, and feeling, a human world. And in this, too, external forms were assumed, and manner became a characteristic of mortals. The same law obtains in the spheres of mind and matter; but how differently displayed! Since the first song of the stars, the heavens have worn the same successive drapery, the earth has changed not her four familiar robes. The winds have raised the billows into mountains, or dallied with the rose-leaves. In all things has nature been

variable, yet the same—ever presenting a well-known though ever varying feature. She knows not the law of fashion. She is inexpert in artificial diplomacy. But manner, among human beings, is subject to the modifications of time and place ; it can be made subservient to the will. In its very nature, manner is a means, and greatly do those err who make it an end. Yet are there individuals, by whom this adjunctive, secondary, exponent principle is supremely cultivated and mainly relied on. There are those who manage to glide along through the world by a kind of mannered legerdemain, who have acquired their manner in the ancient school of Proteus, and by their singular dexterity in ever imparting the required impression, from moment to moment, fail not in their social objects. There is a species of shufflers, who succeed, by virtue of an *off-hand* manner, which mankind, in general, are content to yield to. The most popular class is, doubtless, that which reduces Chesterfield to practice, on principle, and with veritable punctilio. These devotees lean on a broken reed. Their faith in manner is too perfect. With wonder did I once hear a man of sense console himself for the unprincipled conduct of his son, by declaring that "through all he had kept his manners." When tact at mere verbal rhyming constitutes a poet, musical memory a composer, or taste in colors a painter, then may we believe that manners will make a man, for,

> "Heaven never meant him for a passive thing,
> That can be struck and hammered out to suit
> Another's taste and fancy."

There is a policy in manner. I have heard one not inexperienced in the pursuit of fame, give it his earnest support, as being the surest passport to absolute and brilliant success. And

who that has been chained for hours, as by enchantment, with the grace and elegance of an orator, and then, in solitude, reviewed his words, and recalled not a single original and impressive idea, has not realized this? It is wonderful how a skilful mannerist can deceive the world as to his acquirements and motives. I have at this moment, in my mind's eye, the comely figure of an individual who has attained no undesirable elevation in the world of letters, whose manner is so profound and scholar-like, so redolent of the *otium cum dignitate*, that it has earned him the cognomen of *the learned*. A Greek name is inscribed upon his cane, and a Latin adage upon his tongue's end. He yields not to familiar discourse, nor manifests an interest in aught save what is classical. In company with scholars, he is silent, seemingly from abstraction; in the society of the uninitiated, he speaks much, apparently to relieve the exuberance of his acquisitions: the one class attempt not to examine his pretensions, from a horror (natural to high minds) of pedantic display; the other, awe-struck, yield him reverence. Now a few years since, ———; but I will not betray him. Suffice it to say that the first time the magnificence of his manner is invaded, the commanding frost-work of his reputation will melt in air. We habitually suspect the truthfulness of a prominent manner. If, in the presence of an individual, he induces us to think continually of his manner and forget himself, we are quickly aware of our want of affinity. There is no delight in his fellowship. Of all forbidding inventions, an assumed manner is the most effectual. We instinctively anticipate the forthcoming scene behind our backs. Some masterly delineation of the Duke of Gloster in the act of hurling away the prayer book, occurs to us. We are ill at ease; we seem to hear the laugh and witness the mimicry which is to occur when the door has

closed upon our exit. We discern beyond the smile and the honeyed word, and are sickened at the self-created hollowness of a human heart. We have admirable provisions in our civil code, for the crimes of perjury and over-reaching. A thrice heavy penalty should fall upon him convicted of deliberately and habitually practising upon mankind, through the agency of a pre-assumed, politic manner. Manner is the universal language, the grand circulating medium; and should not the attempt to counterfeit the genuine, native stamped coin be made penal? There are no greater forgers in the universe, than cunning mannerists. Their whole lives are false. The loveliest of human attributes, the beautiful, the winning virtue of sincerity, abides not with them. They have abjured the profession of humanity. They have become players—with none of the ideal interest and singleness of purpose which may belong to the legitimate followers of Thespis. The wearisome rehearsals, the guarded conduct, the oppressive sense of having a part to play, the struggles between the real man and the assumed character —all press upon and disturb them; and there are for them no refreshing returns to nature, no blissful interludes in the trying drama, for habit has bound them to the task, and policy goads them on.

There is a poignancy in manner. I have often heard a friend describe the effect produced at a well-surrounded dinner-table, by the silence of a gentleman to whom one of the company, in a very audible voice, had addressed an impertinent question. The tacit rebuke was most keenly felt; it was more effectual than a public reprimand, and yet how entirely devoid of irrational severity. Similar results may be effected through expert application of manner. An instance occurs among the innumerable anecdotes related of John Randolph. A young aspirant for

congressional fame, saw fit, in his maiden speech, to give proof of his boldness and eloquence, by a long and abusive attack upon the eccentric member from Virginia. At the conclusion of the young orator's voluminous address, the hero of Roanoke arose, and stretching his long, nervous arm towards the seat of the complacent youth, with a half-inquiring, half-contemptuous look, thus replied :—"Mr. Speaker, who's that?" There was a sarcastic bitterness in his manner, under which the offender quailed. I was never more impressed with the poignant sting mere manner can inflict, than on one occasion, when abroad. Soon after day-break on a misty morning, the steam-boat which had brought us from Naples, dropped anchor in the port of Leghorn. We waited with great impatience, the arrival of the permit to land, from the Board of Health. At length, understanding it had been received, I joined a party of the passengers, and entered one of the boats which surrounded us. We were distant from the shore about an eighth of a mile. The wind was blowing a gale and the sea running very high. We had reached about the middle of the intervening space, and were beginning to rejoice at the prospect of a comfortable shelter, when the health-officer, from the steam-vessel, hailed our boatman, ordering him upon his peril, not to proceed. It seemed some form had been omitted; and we were kept in the rain, and among the dashing billows, for more than half an hour. Thoroughly vexed at the officer's conduct, we began at last to approach the quay, cold, wet, and comfortless. Various measures were suggested for bringing him to punishment. An Englishman begged that we would leave it to him, assuring us he was well acquainted with the temperament of the people. Soon after the official barge approached, and in the prow sat our enemy with that air of superiority characteristic of under-

lings. With much curiosity we awaited the movements of our British companion. To our astonishment he doffed his hat, and said—addressing the officer—"Your name, sir, if you please." The rowers of the barge slackened their oars and gazed curiously upon their commander; his face was suffused with scarlet—"My name! my name!" he muttered fiercely, and impatiently waving to the oarsmen, they soon shot rapidly away. We looked to the English gentleman for an explanation. "Gentlemen," said he, "be assured I have wounded him to the quick; if I had parleyed with him his pride would have been gratified; but by asking, in a ceremonious manner, for his name, in the presence of his men, as if we disdained to do less than complain to his superior, I have both mortified and alarmed him. The formality of my manner has punished him more than words could possibly do." And so it proved; for on landing we found him pacing the wharf and uttering his indignation and fears most violently, while ample apologies were proffered us from all quarters. I afterwards discovered that to bandy words with the lower class of Italy, was but to waste one's breath, and subject the patience to a great trial;—to meet them on their own ground, and give them the advantage which the fluency of their language affords. They must be addressed by the language of manner, to which they are peculiarly susceptible. There is a power in manner. How finely Byron describes, in the bearing of Conrad—

"that commanding art
That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart."

Who that is susceptible to nature, will deny that the sway of manner consists in its truth? We speak of the impressive dignity of some of the Indian tribes; kings might strive to imi-

tate it in vain. It is the gift of nature—the ennobling grace of the forest lords. The companionship of genius—when do we most perfectly realize it? When enthusiasm has led the gifted mind into such an outpouring that manner is forgotten, and every look and movement is instinct with soul. In aged persons and children—those who have lived too long to meditate effect, and those, who as yet, listen only to the inward oracle, we most frequently see the perfect spell of manner. What a world of allurement is involved in the common phrase, an unaffected manner! Nothing is so delightful as what is spontaneous. A frank expression of sentiment, a native manner, captivate; thrice happy when the latter is habitual. Memnon's image imparted not its mysterious strains except at the touch of the sunbeams, nor will manner yield its true witchery from any inspiration but that of the soul.

FLOWERS.

Floral apostles! that in dewy splendor
Weep without woe, and blush without a crime,
O may I deeply learn and ne'er surrender
Your lore sublime.

HORACE SMITH.

I ATTENDED church on a fine day of midsummer, in one of the most beautiful villages of New England. The structure, though externally attractive, from its retired situation and the pleasant grove that surrounded it, like most places of worship in the country, had a very bare and unhallowed aspect within. The formal divisions of the pews, the superfluity of white paint, and the absence of anything venerable, either in form or hue, made it agreeable to turn the eyes from the thinly scattered congregation and faded pulpit drapery, to the open window, against which a noble linden lightly tossed its sprays, and through which stole in a delicious breeze, that made the leaves of the hymn books flutter a response to that sylvan whispering, which had in it more of devotional music than the screeching bass-viol and unchastened voices that soon drowned all other sounds. In reverting to the scene more immediately adjacent, however, I suddenly beheld a vase of flowers on the communion-table. They were most inartificially and tastefully arranged; the brilliant tints judiciously blended, the shadowy green naturally disposed, and the base of the jar which contained them wreathed with trailing blossoms. The sight of this vase of flowers was like enchantment. It seemed to fill that forlorn

church with its presence. It spoke of nature, of beauty, of truth, more eloquently than the service. It atoned for the meagre altar, the homely edifice, and the ungarnished pews. It seemed to embody and typify the externals of worship with sacramental chalice, baptismal cup, and odorous censer.

Science and sentiment have rather formalized than illustrated the association of flowers; the one by its rigid nomenclature, and the other by an arbitrary language, profane the ideal charms of the floral kingdom. It is pleasant to regard these graceful denizens of the garden and forest, in the spirit of that fine hymn of Horace Smith's which celebrates their beautiful significance. Instead of looking at them through the microscopic lens of mere curiosity, or according to the fanciful and hackneyed alphabet that Floral dictionaries suggest, let us note their influence as symbols and memorials. To analyse the charm of flowers, is like dissecting music; it is one of those things which it is far better to enjoy than to attempt to understand. In observing the relation of flowers to life and character, I have often been tempted to believe that a subtle and occult magnetism pervaded their atmosphere; that inscriptions of wisdom covered their leaves; and that each petal, stem, and leaf, was the divining rod or scroll that held an invisible truth.

Viewed abstractly, one of the peculiar attractions of flowers is the fact that they seem a gratuitous development of beauty; "they toil not, neither do they spin." In almost every other instance in nature, the beautiful is only incidental to the useful; but flowers have the objectless, spontaneous luxury of existence that belongs to childhood. They typify most eloquently the benign intent of the universe; and by gratifying, through the senses, the instinct of beauty, vindicate the poetry of life with a divine sanction. Their fragility is another secret charm. A

vague feeling that the bright hue is soon to wither and the rich odor to exhale, awakens in the mind, unconsciously, that interest which alone attaches to the idea of decay. These two ideas—that of the gratuitous offering of nature in the advent of flowers, the benison their presence seems to convey, and the thought of their brief duration—invest flowers with a moral significance that renders their beauty more touching, and, as it were, nearer to humanity, than any other species of material loveliness. The infinite variety of form, the exquisite combination of tints, the diversity of habits, and odorous luxuries they boast, it would require an elaborate treatise to unfold. We may obtain an idea of the perfection and individuality of their forms by considering their suggestiveness. Scarcely a tasteful fabric meets the eye, from the rich brocade of a past age to the gay prints of to-day, that owes not its pleasing design to some flower. Not an ancient urn or modern cup of porcelain or silver, but illustrates in its shape, and the embossed or painted sides, how truly beautiful is art when it follows strictly these eternal models of grace and adaptation. Even architecture, as Ruskin justly indicates, is chiefly indebted to the same source, not only in the minute decorations of a frieze, but in the acanthus that terminates a column, and the leaf-like pointing of an arch. A skilful horticulturist will exhibit the most delicate shades of fragrance in different species of the rose, until a novice cannot but realize to what a miraculous extent the most refined enjoyment in nature may be sublimated and modified; and the same thing is practicable as regards both hue and form.

The spirit of beauty, in no other inanimate embodiment, comes so near the heart. Flowers are related to all the offices and relations of human life. They bound the sacrificial victim of the ancients; and, from the earliest times, have been woven

into garlands for the victor, trembled in the hair of the bride and cheered the invalid's solitude. They have been ever offered at the shrine of beauty, and claimed as the pledges of love, nor ceased to adorn the banquet or be scattered over the grave. Thus domesticated, even without intrinsic beauty, and exclusive of any appeal to taste, flowers are blended in the memories of the least poetical with scenes of unwonted delight, keen emotion, and profound sorrow. Hence they have a language for each, not recognised in any alphabet, and their incense is allied with the issues of destiny. McGregor's foot was more firmly planted, because upon his "native heather;" the Syrian, in the Jardin des Plants, wept as he clasped his country's palm-tree; Keats said, in his last illness, that he felt the daisies growing over him; and one who, even in renowned maturity, had wandered little from the singleness of childhood, declared he could never see a marigold without his mouth's watering at the idea of those swimming in the broth Simple Susan prepared for her mother, in Miss Edgeworth's little story. There is no end to the caressing allusions of Petrarch to the violet and the laurel, so identified with the dress and name of his beloved. Indeed, we might scan biography and the poets for years, and continually find new evidences of the familiar and endearing relation of flowers to sentiment. Each of the latter have celebrated some favorite of the race in their choicest numbers; and the very names of Ophelia and Perdita are fragrant with the flowers that Shakspeare, with the rarest and most apposite grace, has entwined with their history.

The Venetian painters must have studied color in the hues of flowers; for the brilliant, distinct, and warm tone of their works affects the spectator exactly as these rainbow gems; especially when they strike the eye in an isolated position, or sur-

rounded by dim umbrage. Nor is this effect confined to the domesticated flowers; for the richest and most delicate gradations of tint occur among uncultivated and indigenous plants—such as the lobelia of the swamp, the saffron of the meadow, and the nameless variety of prairie blossoms. There are few more curious subjects of speculation than the *modus operandi* by which such an infinite diversity of colors are obtained from the same apparent source. This is an exquisite secret of nature's laboratory. The physiology of plants has been successfully investigated; and it is interesting to consider that the vitality of flowers is much the same as our own as regards its process, though so different in kind. They have affinities of sensibility; they germinate and fructify; but the elements they assimilate are more subtle than those which sustain animal organization; yet sun, earth, and air nourish them according to a nutritive principle not unlike that by which our frames are sustained. The reciprocal action between vegetable and organic life, and their respective absorption and diffusion of gases, is one of the most beautiful expositions of science. But the instinct of flowers is not less curious; some fold their leaves at the approach of a storm, and others open and shut at particular hours, so that botanists have rejoiced in floral dials and barometers. Their relation to sight and smell is very obvious; but that to touch is less regarded, and yet it is extraordinary how the feel of almost every known fabric can be realized by the contact of leaves. Where the touch is sensitive, experiments of this kind may be tried, much to the amusement of the sportive; for many leaves, if unperceived, and at the same time subject to an exquisite touch, give the sensation of animal, insect, and even mineral substances, indicating how intricately modified are the proportions of fibre, down, juice, and enamel in their composition.

In their associations, however, flowers are quite independent, both of rare qualities and peculiar beauty. Almost all great men have loved rural seclusion, and have had their favorite villa, island, arbor, or garden-walk. In Switzerland, Germany, and, indeed, everywhere on the continent, these places, consecrated by the partiality or endeared by the memory of genius, are shrines for the traveller. Such are Clarens, Vaucluse, and Coppe. Lamartine's tenderness for Milly, his childhood's home, as exhibited in his late writings, illustrates a sentiment common to all imaginative and affectionate men; but it is observable that sometimes these charmed spots boast no remarkable floral attractions, often only sufficient to make them rural; a grove of pines, a small vineyard, a picturesque view, and not infrequently a single tree—like the famous old elm at Northampton, amid whose gigantic branches Dr. Edwards, who wrote the celebrated treatise on the Will, was accustomed to sit and meditate;—any truly natural object redolent of verdure and shade, is enough. And the hedges of England, the moors of Scotland, the terrace-gardens of Italy, the scrambling, prickly-pear fences of Sicily, and the orchards of America, are attractive to the natives of each country, on the same principle. It is the beautiful distinction of flowers that, gathered into magnificent horticultural shows or hidden in lonely nooks, they alike address the sense of beauty, so that a little sprig of forget-me-nots may excite a world of sentiment, and one scarlet geranium irradiate an entire dwelling.

Flowers not only have their phenomena, but their legends. The latter are usually based upon some idea of a sympathetic character, as that which transforms Daphne into a laurel, and changes the pale hue of a flower to crimson or purple at the occurrence of human shame or misfortune. Even veneration is

excited by the mysterious natural history of some flowers, or the idea they symbolize. Thus the aloe, that blossoms once in a century, and the night-blooming Cereus, which keeps vigil when all other flowers sleep; and the Passion-flower, in which the Catholics behold the tokens of our Saviour's agony, have a kind of solemn attraction for the eye and fancy.

There is no little revelation of character in floral preferences. It accords with the humanity of Burns that he should celebrate the familiar daisy; with the delicate organization of Shelley that a sensitive plant should win his muse; and with Bryant's genuine observation of nature that he dedicates a little poem to an inelegant and neglected gentian. It is in harmony with the English idiosyncrasy and church attachments of Southey, that his most charming minor poem is in praise of the holly, the symbol of a Christian and national festival; and no poet but Crabbe would descend to so homely a vegetable product as kelp. There is no flower more peculiar in its beauty and growth than the water-lily; accordingly, Coleridge, with his metaphysical tendency to seize on rare and impressive analogies, has drawn a comparison from this flower which strikes me as one of the most poetical as well as felicitous in modern literature. Speaking of the zest for new truth felt by those already well instructed, as compared with the indifferent mental appetite of the ignorant, he says, "The water-lily, in the midst of waters, opens its leaves and expands its petals at the first pattering of the shower, and rejoices in the rain-drops with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert." The dreamy, half sensuous, and half ideal nature of Tennyson, is naturally attracted by the sweet ravishment innate in the breath and juices of some flowers. He is fitted keenly to appreciate the luxurious indolence and fanciful ecstasy thus induced; and, therefore, one

of the most effective and original of his poems is "The Lotus Eaters." Moore's famous image of the sunflower is a constant bone of contention between horticulturists and poets; the former asserting that it does not turn round with the luminary it is supposed to adore, but is as fixed on its stalk as any other flower; and the latter declaring that the metaphor "*se non é vero, é ben trovato.*"

Few plants are more graceful or versatile in contour than the fern. One can scarcely pass a group without recalling that line of Scott which so aptly describes the utter lull of the air :—

"There is no breeze upon the fern, no ripple on the lake."

And what figure of rhetoric better suggests the caprice of woman than that which has almost become proverbial since it was incorporated in his spirited verse :—

"—— variable as the shade
By the light, quivering aspen made !"

Goldsmith's sympathy with the rural and human is associated intimately with the hawthorn, "for whispering lovers made." Rosemary has been more emblematic of remembrance, since it was so offered by the "fair Ophelia;" and Heart's-ease is consecrated by the splendid compliment to "the virgin throned by the West," to which it is indebted for the name of "love-in-idleness." The epicurean utilitarianism of Leigh Hunt recognised "comfort" in the feel of a geranium leaf; and who that has read with appreciation Miss Barrett's fine poem, elaborating the beautiful sentiment of the Bible, "He giveth his beloved sleep," can see a poppy, that gorgeous emblem of the drowsy god, without a benison on the thoughtful lyrist? I think that

the yellow broom must have originally flourished in lonely places. For hours, I followed a mule-path in the most deserted part of Sicily, cheerful with its blossoms, whose rich yet delicate odor embalmed the air; hence the significance of Shakspeare's allusion to this flower, "which the dismissed bachelor loves, being lass-lorn." Campbell must have had an oppressive sense of the poisonous horror of night-shade, from his reference to it, in the protest against scepticism, as the natural companion of dismay. I have always thought the thistle an apposite symbol, not only of Scotland, but of her martyred queen—"its fragrant down set round with thorns, and rifled by the bee."

One of the most popular tales of the day—"Picciola"—is based upon the interest which a single flower may excite when it is the sole companion of a prisoner; and the favor this little romance has enjoyed, proves how natural is the sentiment it unfolds. The most severely religious minds, however indifferent to art or scenery, are not infrequently alive to this feeling; the constant allusion to flowers, in a metaphorical way, in the Scriptures; the rich poetical meaning attached to them in the East; the lily that always appears in pictures of the Annunciation; the palm-leaves strewed in our Saviour's path; the crown of thorns woven for his brow, and his declaration of the field lilies, "that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them"—indicating that his pure eyes had momentarily rested on their familiar beauty—lend to such persons a hallowed sense of their attractiveness. There is yet another reason for this exception to a prosaic view of what is merely charming in itself, which those disposed to bigotry make in favor of flowers. It is that they symbolize immortality. No common figure of speech is more impressive to the peasant than that which bids him see a "type of resurrection and second birth," in the germination

of the seed, its growth, development, and blossoming. Again, too, there are the associations of childhood, whose first and most innocent acquisitions were gathered flowers, emblems of its own exuberance, offerings of its primitive love. I imagine the sense of color—now regarded as a separate and very unequally distributed faculty—is one of the earliest developed; it explains the intense gratification even of an infant at the sight of a tulip; and there is reason to believe that the hues of flowers are the most vivid tokens of enjoyment that greet the dawning mind.

The orientals, adepts in voluptuous ease, place vases of flowers around their fountains; and, as they lie upon divans, their eyes close, in the refreshing siesta, with these radiant sentinels for the last image to blend with their dreams, and their odor to mingle with the misty spray and cheer their waking. The Greek maidens dropped flowers from their windows on those that passed, to indicate their scorn, praise, or love. One of the poetic touches which redeem the frugal lot of the grisettes, is the habit they indulge of keeping a box of mignonette on their window-sills. You may see them at dawn bending over it, to sprinkle the roots or enjoy the perfume. In Tuscany and the Neapolitan territory, peasants wear gay flowers in their hats; while the more grave people of the intervening country rarely so adorn themselves. I was struck, at the wedding of an American in France, to see the servants, tearful at parting with their mistress, decorating the interior of her carriage with white flowers. There is something, however, very artificial in the dry *immortels*, here and there dyed black, for sale at the gates of Père la Chaise, and bought by the humbler class of mourners to hang on the crosses that mark the graves of kindred. Our own rural cemeteries are teaching a better lesson. The culture

of flowers on such domains, is not only in excellent taste, but, when judiciously selected and arranged, a grateful memorial. At Monaco, a town in Italy, a few years since, the body of a young child was covered with flowers, according to the custom of the place; and when sought for the purpose of interment, it was found sitting up and playing with the flowers—an affecting and beautiful evidence of the ignorance of death characteristic of that spotless age.

Fashion seldom interferes with nature without diminishing her grace and efficiency. It denudes the masculine face of the beard, its distinctive feature; substitutes for the harmonious movement of the chaste and blithesome dance, the angular caprices of the polka; clips and squares the picturesque in landscape into formalized proportions; and condemns half the world to an unattractive and inconvenient costume. Even flowers seem profaned by its touch; there is something morbid in their breath when exhaled profusely in gorgeous saloons and ostentatiously displayed at a heartless banquet; and wisely as the florist may adjust them into bouquets, they are so firmly entwined and intricately massed together, as often to resemble mosaic. We turn often from the most costly specimen of this appanage of the ball and opera, with a feeling of relief to the single white rosebud on a maiden's breast, or the light jasmin wreath on her brow. The quantity and showy combination of the flowers, especially the heated atmosphere and commonplace gabble of the scene, and often the want of correspondence between the person who so consciously holds the bouquet in her gloved hand and the sweet nature it represents, rob the flowers of their legitimate claim. Indeed, like all truly beautiful things, they demand the appropriate as a sphere. The east wind, in Boston, on the last national holiday, and the grave

faces of the children, to say nothing of the idea that approbativeness and acquisitiveness were the organs mainly called in play in their little overworked brains, utterly dispelled all genuine romance and grateful illusion from the floral procession. Something analogous in character, atmosphere, and occasion, is needed to render the ministry of flowers affecting and complete.

We instinctively identify our acquaintances with flowers. The meek and dependent are as lilies of the valley, and, like them, need the broad and verdant shield of affectionate nurture; sycophants are parasites; exuberant and glowing beauty and feeling are more like the damask rose than anything in nature; the irritable annoy us like nettles; the proud emulate the crown imperial; the graceful are lithe as vine-sprays; the loving wind around our hearts like tendrils; and the cheerful brighten the dim background of life like the scarlet blossoms of the woodbine. Not a flower in the cornucopia of the floral goddess but hath its similitude and its votary. The boy's first miracle is to press the seed-vessels of the balsamine till it snaps at his touch; or shouts, as he runs from bed to the garden, at the sight of the rich chalice of the morning-glory, planted by his own little hand, that has opened while he slept. The clover's pink globe, and the deep crimson bloom of the sumac; the exquisite scent of the locust, and the auspicious blooming of the lilac; the hood-like purple of the fox-glove, and the dainty tint of the sweet pea, stir, whenever they reappear, those dormant memories of early and unalloyed consciousness, which

> "—— neither man nor boy,
> Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
> Can utterly abolish or destroy."

Thus, from the first, perverted mortal, thou wert indebted to flowers;—as a wayward urchin, loitering on the way to school, thou whistled shrilly against the edge of a grass-blade, held a butter-cup to the chin of thy little comrade, or puffed away the feathery seed-blossom of the dandelion to ascertain if thy secret wish would be consummated; as a youth, with quivering pulses and flushed brow, thou wert not ashamed to seek the choicest flowers as interpreters of thy feelings towards one before whom thy words were tremulous, yet fond; and in thy prime, when positive knowledge and accurate deduction constituted thy felicity, it was, or might have been, to thee a rational pastime to study the botanical relations, laws, and habits of these poetic effusions of the earth; causing them to gratify thee through analysis, as they once did through sentiment. And "in that Indian summer of the soul," that descends on frosty age, how do flowers serve as the magic connecting bond that unites senility and childhood! The eye of age softens as it beholds the shower of blossoms from the fruit-trees, thinks of its own flowery day, and is thankful for a serene maturity. Thus have flowers an utterance everywhere and always; the wild columbine, on its thread-like stem, that hangs on the stony cliff; the fungus, that swells from the mouldering trunk of gigantic forest trees; the tropical exotics of the *stuffo*, that almost bewilder in their strange beauty; and the buds that open beneath Alpine snows, address our sense of adventure, of wonder, and of gentleness, in quiet, yet persuasive appeals, that sometimes we cannot choose but heed.

The fondness of the Dutch for tulips, it may be conjectured, is partly owing to the flatness of their country, as well as its alluvial soil; the absence of picturesque variety in form inducing a craving for the most vivid sensations from color. Perhaps

the compactness and neat growth of bulbous roots, so adapted to their cleanly and well-arranged domicils, somewhat accounts for the exquisite degree of cultivation to which they bring this species of flowers. It is one characteristic advantage of such natural ornaments, that a few well selected, or even one in a room, or in the midst of a grass-plat, will diffuse refreshment and excite imagination. Thus the flowers that cluster on the roofs of Genoa, and the little knot of violets imbedded in geranium leaves dispensed by the flower-girls in Tuscany, are more pleasing than if the display were greater. On revisiting a city of the latter State, after years of absence, as I followed the lagging porter who carried my luggage, in the twilight of early morning, I was startled by a cordial exclamation, "*Ben tornato, O ben tornato, signore!*" and looking down a narrow street, I saw the flower-girl from whom I had so long ago been accustomed to purchase, gaily advancing with a bouquet. It was a welcome such as awaits the traveller in few countries, and one which touched the heart with cheerful augury.

There is, indeed, something in flowers redolent of hope and suggestive of amity. Their very universality renders them eloquent of greeting. The fair, maternal bosom of Titian's Flora has a significance beyond that which artists recognise; it proclaims Nature as a beneficent parent, lavishly dispensing the flowers that strew life's rugged path, with sweet monitions and grateful refreshment. How, in the season of vivid emotion, has the unexpected sight of a pale crocus bursting from the mould in early spring, the teeming odor of a magnolia tossed on a summer breeze, or the green flakes of a larch, powdered with snowy crystal in the winter sun, kindled the very frame with a kind of mysterious delight! There is to the poetical sense, a ravishing prophecy and winsome intimation in flowers, that now

and then, from the influence of mood or circumstance, re-asserts itself like the reminiscence of childhood or the spell of love. Then we realize that they are the survivors of our lost paradise, the types of what is spontaneous, inspiring, and unprofaned in life and humanity, the harbingers of a blissful futurity. It was, therefore, in a rational as well as a fanciful spirit, that trees were consecrated into emblems and auguries; that the willow, in its meek flexibility, was made the insignia of desertion; the cypress, in its solemn and dense foliage, of death; the enduring amaranth, of immortality; and the classic shaped, and bright green leaves of the laurel, of fame.—Not only in their native traits, but in their almost sympathetic habits, flowers come near our affections. How patiently the ivy binds the disjointed stones of a ruined edifice, and the moss creeps over the grey and time-stained roots and rocks, as if to cover their decay, and relieve their sterility! With what a wreathing protection clusters the woodbine round the humble porch! The field flowers, some one has truly said, smile up to us as children to the face of a father; and the seeds of those destined for birds, fly on innumerable wings of down, to germinate the more abundantly. The warm hues of the dahlia would be oppressive in any other season than autumn; and the glitter of the ocean's strand is chastened by the gay weeds, whose variegated tints are freshened by every wave that dies along the beach. Even this herbal, the repository of memorials gleaned from hallowed scenes, or treasured as the fragile trophies of joys as fragile, "strikes the electric chain" of imagination and memory with a deeper vibration than a sketch-book or a diary. That little cluster of thin, pale green leaves, with a shade of delicate brown at the edges (called by the Italians the Hair of Venus), which clings to the page as if painted on its surface,

once hung from the dark, rocky wall of the remarkable cavern in Syracuse, called the Ear of Dionysius; and as I look upon it, the deserted bay, crumbling tombs, and wreck-strewn *campagna* of that ancient site are vividly before me; even the flavor of the Hybla honey, and the echo of the mule's tramp, return to my senses. This weed, so common in shape and hue that it needs a reminiscence to justify its preservation, was plucked as I stood tip-toe on the edge of a gondola, and held fast to old Antonio's shoulder, while he checked his oar beneath the Bridge of Sighs, and I snatched it from the interstices of the arch. The piazza of San Marco, the Adriatic glowing with the flush of sunset, the lonely canals, and all the grey quietude of Venice, are conjured by the withered memento, "as at the touch of an enchanter's wand." More costly acquisitions have yielded less zest in the winning than this slender yellow flower, which, evading the jealous watchfulness of the guard at Pompeii, I gathered to assure myself thenceforth that I had actually walked the streets of the buried city. How venerable seems this bunch of grass and flowers that drew its sustenance from the loamy walls of the Coliseum; and with how marvellous a freshness do I call up the medieval architecture, exquisite *campanile*, and mountain boundaries of Florence, beholding again the anemone purloined, on a fine Sabbath morning, in the gardens of the Boboli! I cannot see this cassia blossom without feeling a certain impulsion to monastic life, as I think of the kind friars, the noble organ, lava-heaped confines and soothing retirement of the Benedictine convent, at Catania, whence I bore it as the memento of one of those white days in the traveller's experience, that atone for a thousand discomforts. Pleasant was the summer evening, at Messina, when, in one of the palaces that line the *marina*, we kept gay vigil in order to witness the blooming of this faded

Cereus; and high beat the pulses of an entranced multitude on the night this faded nosegay was pressed to the lips of Amina, in that last *scena*, when her voice quivered with uncontrollable feeling, and carolled the "*Ah! non giunge*" in tones of such pathetic delight as brought a tear to the sternest eye. I will not throw away this rusty-looking japonica, but keep it as a talisman to guard me from the fascination of heartless beauty, reflecting on the character of the brilliant ———, in whose dark hair it rested during the last ball of her triumphant season, that bewitching face displaying every phase of expression, while not one look was inspired by a soul, any more than this flower, in its graceful prime, was imbued with fragrance. Far different is the association that endears the scarlet honeysuckle and white holyhock beside it. Through peaceful hours that overflowed with unuttered tenderness, and an ecstatic sense of geniality and recognition, I watched beside one I loved; the humming-bird and the bee sipping the nectar from their chalices, and compared the luxurious pastime with my own. Nor will I cease to treasure this orange-blossom given me by the dark-eyed Palermitan, in the grove of her father's domain, when the air was filled with the odor of the sweet south, and musical with the far-off chime of the vesper-bells. The scent of this grape-blossom is associated with the hospitality of a villa below Fiesole; and that heliotrope makes me think of a fair invalid with whom I wandered among the ilexes of a palace-garden, in whose grassy walks the vanilla flower grew profusely. I saved the reedy leaf that is stitched to the opposite page, as one of the countless proofs of the thoughtful care of my motherly hostess at ———. She stuck it in my window on Palm Sunday. When gleaned in a field near Lucca, this little flax-blossom held a dew-drop, and looked like the tearful blue eye of a child. Arid as it

is, the pink, star-like flower beneath whispers of romance. At a pic-nic, a friend of mine who has an extreme impatience of tenter-hooks, determined to have his position with a certain fair one defined, as, after some encouragement, she seemed half-inclined for another. With true feminine tact she avoided an interview, though they constantly met. I believe she either could not decide between the two, or hated to give up my friend. He laughingly proposed, while we were resting in a meadow, to make his favorite a sybil, and handed her a knot of these starry flowers, to pluck the leaves one by one, and reveal the hearts of the company, according to a familiar game. When the time came to apply the test to her own sentiments, she was visibly embarrassed. He fixed his calm eyes upon her face, and I, knowing at once his delicacy and his superstition, felt that this was a crisis. The lovely creature's voice trembled, when, half petulantly, and with visible disappointment, she plucked away the last leaf, which proved her only his well-wisher. The omen was accepted, and my friend soon had

> "———a rougher task in hand
> Than to drive liking to the name of love."

Flowers are the most unobjectionable and welcome of gifts. There is a delicacy in selecting an offering, whether of gratitude, kindness, or affection, that sometimes puzzles a considerate mind; but where any such hesitancy occurs, we can turn to flowers with complacency. Nature furnishes them, and all her beautiful products may bravely challenge fastidiousness. No human being not utterly perverted, can scorn flowers: nor can they be offered, even to the spoiled child of fortune, without an implied compliment to taste. The fairest of Eve's daughters, and the proudest scion of nobility, as well as the village beauty,

the most gifted and least cultivated—provided either imagination or heart exists—must feel gratified at such a tribute, whether from dependent or equal, new acquaintance or faithful lover. Like all spontaneous attractions, that of flowers gives them immunity from ordinary rules. They are so lovely and so frail, that, like children, they bespeak indulgence ere they offend. Of all material things, they excite the most chivalric sentiment; and hence, are given and received, scattered and woven, cultivated and gathered, worn and won, with a more generous and refined spirit than any other ornaments. They are radiant hieroglyphics sculptured on the earth's bosom; perhaps the legacy of angels, but certainly overflowing with messages of love that are apart from the work-day scenes and prosaic atmosphere of common life, and allied to better moments; to the sweet episodes of existence, to the promises of love, and the memories of youth; and hence they are consecrated, and like "the quality of mercy," bless "him that gives and her that takes."

BROAD VIEWS.

Thou shalt know that this Universe is what it professes to be—an *infinite* one. Attempt not to swallow it for thy logical digestion.

CARLYLE.

It is pleasant to steal away from a group of system-worshippers, and commune awhile with some solitary, uncourted being, whose scope of thought is unlimited by any artificial bounds, and the play of whose feelings is as free as the mountain wind. It is like leaving the smoky precincts of a highland hut, on a summer morning, to stand beneath the open sky and look forth upon the hills. There is something as refreshing to the mind's eye in broad views of life and man, of art and literature, of facts and individuals, of nature and society, as there is to the bodily sense in majestic and boundless scenery. Broad views are characteristic of mental elevation. To the eagle's eye, when he hangs poised among the clouds, a common arena and universal atmosphere blend the aspect of earth and her myriads. By as certain a law, does the human universe present a general and softened picture to the intellect, sublimated by love and enlarged by culture.

It was once my privilege to walk through a renowned repository of art, with a man of genius. I had scrutinized the various objects there preserved with companions of less *calibre*, who evidently prided themselves upon detecting discrepancies of style and errors of execution, My new *cicerone*, on the contrary, designated beauties in works, which, as wholes, are held in light

estimation, and was continually directing my attention to the lesser excellences of the more celebrated productions. This was the genuine spirit of noble criticism. Broad views are as naturally taken by gifted men, as limited ones by those of subordinate intelligence. You never hear an ardent lover of art or literature commenting *con amore*, upon the minor blemishes of a production in which genius is dominant. How do the aspirants for a reputation for gentility, err by continually mooting the narrow topic of rank; and how do the would-be critics mistake their vocation by anxiously discussing etymologies! Broad views are the legitimate result of experience and general knowledge.

The author of some modern farce makes one of his heroes, an accomplished Parisian duellist, console a foreign coxcomb whom he has challenged, by promising to have him "neatly packed up and directed." Somewhat after this fashion, men appear to be dealt with in society. Because an individual sees fit to connect himself with a certain association, manifest an interest in a specific object, or temporarily display, with more than ordinary force, a particular principle of his nature, he is at once classed, newly baptized with a party name, enrolled, severed by an artificial distinction—in a word, "packed up and directed." An imaginary badge is affixed to him as significant as the phylactery of the pharisee, the star of courtly honor, or the colored ribbon denoting academic or knightly preferment. To all the general interests and purposes of social life, he is proscribed. The usual method of answering the question, "What sort of a person is ——?" is to designate the body political, scientific, or otherwise, to which the individual is attached. A fashionable votary refers you to the "circle," a religionist to the "sect," and an intellectualist, to the "school;"

each "packs up and directs" that most diverse, spontaneous, and free of human results—character, according to his whim.

Classification is doubtless very applicable to minerals and plants, and labels have been found very useful in pharmacy. The inert, unalterable, fixed qualities of matter may be designated by a specific or generic name, may be "packed up and directed;" but the idea of so disposing of human beings—of indicating the endless modifications of feeling, imagination, and thought, by any epithet referring only to opinions, is preposterous in the extreme. We have two brief, but most expressive terms for the two most sublime objects in the universe; we speak of sea and sky; but who ever thinks of taking profound cognisance of a particular wave, or devoutly following through the horizon a single, shifting cloud? We regard the various movements of the deep and the ever changing aspect of the heavens, with perfect confidence that the calm ethereal canopy of the one still stretches in beauty above, and the fathomless depths of the other still sound on their way below. Why should we be less just to man? Why believe that the deep attributes, the great elements of his nature, are invaded by the aspects his versatile being presents in a world of circumstances? Why fix our eye upon the temporary wave or the passing cloud, when there is an infinite depth below and a glorious expanse above, which shall endure when the currents of opinion and the breezes of circumstance have died away on an illimitable shore?

If Madame de Staël did not err in her idea that mankind are never alike but "through affectation or design," then this system of classifying is especially unjust, and to form any definite notion of an individual from the party-title affixed to him, is altogether unphilosophical. Yet how perversely we cut

ourselves off from society calculated to inspire the deepest interest or to exert a most auspicious influence, by the dominion of some foolish antipathy! Hundreds are avoided or but casually known because they labor under the imputation of being antiquarians, phrenologists, or littérateurs, as if each and all of these characters might not be cultivated without absorbing humanity! Yet being "packed up and directed" under these or equally effective terms, men, ay, and woment too, are rendered obnoxious to no small portion of their fellow creatures. "Why do you not converse with Miss A——?" I inquired of a very sensible lady at a party the other evening. "Oh, I'm terribly afraid of literary ladies," she replied, with an ill-suppressed shudder at my suggestion. Now the lady in question had merely given to the public some lively sketches of common life, such as would have been very appropriate epistolary matter wherewith to entertain an absent friend; and she was in the habit of talking well of everything in the whole range of topics, except literature, about which she knew and cared no more than was absolutely necessary to vindicate her claims to ordinary cultivation. Yet was she thus unceremoniously "packed up" in that peculiarly odious box marked "blues."

This miserable habit of our times is vividly illustrated by the manner in which those next most sacred things to mortals, books, are treated. Celsus reprobates the idea of a fixed system of diet, on the ground that men are exposed to every variety of influence and condition of body; and if books have been justly considered as mental food, then may we, on the same ground, advantageously vary our reading. Yet there is scarcely an individual who has not "packed up and directed" numberless works, of the true value of which he is altogether unaware;

packed them up in the iron casket of prejudice, and directed them to the far distant region of neglect.

"It is the spirit of the soul's natural piety," says a British divine, "to alight on whatever is touching or beautiful in every faith, and take thence its secret draught of pure and fresh emotion." And so is it the spirit of him accustomed to broad views, to recognise man, as such, however artificially displayed, to blot out, at a glance, the label society has attached to him, and behold the earlier and indelible signature of nature :—

——— "that secret spirit of humanity,
Which, 'mid her weeds and flowers, and silent
Overgrowings, still survives."

THE RATIONALE OF LOVE.

"Nature is fine in love."

SHAKSPEARE.

I HAVE read of a Prairie traveller lost amid a sea of flowers and verdure, without food or compass, who, after wandering famished for weary days, struck upon the traces of a horse-path, and followed it hopefully and long, until he was dismayed to find himself upon his own trail, having travelled in a circle, to sink at last at the very spot where he first discovered his error. Is it not often so with love? Do we not fondly imagine ourselves close upon the trail of another soul, when we are only bewildered in the mazes of our own imaginations, and awaken to the final conviction that the goal of feeling is identical with its starting-point? Still, in all things, do we not arrive at good through perplexity and baffled endeavors? Is it not weak to doubt a reality to which consciousness bears invariable testimony? Truth ultimately prevails in matters of feeling as well as of fact, for the "eternal years of God are hers."

Yet how few understand the sanctity of love! Only those to whom it is a principle, not an accident, can appreciate its holiness. It is like religion in its world-renouncing spirit. Its true votaries are those who, in their commerce with society, present a calm, I had almost said an unattractive presence. They are indifferent, statuesque, or, it may be, a buoyant and kindly spirit haunts the vestibule, while love lies hid behind the veil of the inner temple. Expression itself, under the influ-

ence of consecrated affection, has become sacred. No longer is it completely active, open, and visible; but rather lieth, like the electric fluid, in a cloud, to be deeply revealed only at the invocation of the loved. "There is a gloom," says Landor, "in deep love, as in deep water; there is a silence in it that suspends the foot; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects." As a master hand alone can call forth the richest tones of an instrument, so but one creature in the universe can evoke the latent inspiration of the devoted soul. He who smiles alike on all has never surrendered up his heart to one. Even animal instinct might give a lesson in this regard. Some birds instantly desert their nest when profaned by a human touch, which they instinctively discover. Well says the poet;

> "Be wise: not easily forgiven
> Are those, who, setting wide the doors that bar
> The secret bridal chamber of the heart,
> Let in the day."

There is a kind of monastic bearing which indicates to the spiritual observer Love's genuine votary. The harem of the Turk is a tyrannical and an outward seclusion, and many a nun's bosom is peopled with earthly desires. There is a self-imposed privacy, less easily invaded than convent walls. It is the courteous reserve or the playful indifference which a strong and true being maintains, when loyal and earnest love possesses the citadel of the soul. Let the world call it pride or levity, let the vain flutterers in life's sunshine turn disappointed from the folded flower; let the eye be condemned for its unresponsive glance, and the cheek for its unvarying hue. There is a lamp within the vase, which the torch of the many cannot

illume. More intense, more pure and real, is the emotion that is hoarded in the breast. More subduing and deep is the feeling which like fire in ice, or fruit in flowers, is guarded by a chilly or sweet barrier from all profanation. The nature which borrows all its excitement from the love of pleasing, may spread like a broad river widely and free, but noble and profound sympathies work inwardly until they gush towards heaven in musical and radiant fountains. It is painful to a sensitive mind to be misunderstood; it requires no little heroism patiently to be considered devoid of what is in fact most truly characteristic; yet, who would not give up popularity for appreciation, admiration of the multitude for the love of a few, fashionable success for genial communion, the passing tributes of society for the absolute devotion of the individual? Those to whom this is a great sacrifice may have a mental perception, but they can have no consciousness of love. To an imaginative mind there can be no attraction like the evidence of a peculiar sentiment which the renewed self-respect of its object betrays. There is nothing exacting in this. It is but the proof of an actual in distinction from a fanciful relation. It brings home, as no professions can, the feeling of having achieved a destiny. Such an event ought to make life a different thing, and color anew all its associations. More distant thenceforth are the conventional ties of existence, more defined every feeling of the heart. The affections have at last a sublime repose. Benevolence may, indeed, be active; but love is no longer a matter of speculation. It has ceased to be a circulating medium, and is all called in to be fused in one golden mass, and deposited in the soul's treasury for ever.

The lights and shades of love are countless. The attractiveness of women is a quality of "infinite variety." Werter

thought the object of his affection peculiarly winning, as she distributed bread to hungry children. Standing like Ruth in the midst of the harvest, her flaxen hair streaming in the breeze, her cheek glowing, her blue e'en liquid and bright, how wholly fascinating in the eyes of Robert Burns, was the lassie from whose sweet palm he picked the nettles! Juliet was not fairer in the moonlit balcony, nor Laura amid the solemn graces of the church of St. Clara. She with whom it is delightful to walk, may be wholly unimpressive when silently at work. I knew a fair Spaniard whose most effective position was at her embroidery. How archly she plied the needle! There was a sort of bewitching consciousness of power in the way she punctured the canvas. Her attitude was a picture; the very bend of the shoulders, the stag-like air of the head, the play of the dark eye-lashes as they rose and fell from the pattern to her work, the occasional sigh of weariness, and graceful tossing back of the long ringlets—every look and movement was beautiful. A man's heart may be won in an afternoon's ramble, leaving tongue-craft out of the question. A fine walk and confiding fellowship of bearing will subdue many who are quite insensible to the household graces. Di Vernon understood this. If the sex only knew their strong points, or were content to instinctively abide by them, how universally agreeable they would all be! But with a curious perversity, they almost invariably pride themselves on their weak wing. Women fitted to shine in conversation will spend hours in the vain endeavor to set off advantageously their small modicum of personal beauty, when their true course would be to win the eye from critical observance, by charming the ear. There are women whose silence is absolutely beautiful, whose faces breathe a quiet spell that even words "spoken in season" would break,

whose simple presence hath enough of captivation, giving the fancy an entrancing impulse which no eloquence could rival. There is a vast difference between the handsome and the lovely. We look on the former with the same equanimity with which we regard a fine statue. The very beauty of such faces often springs from the absence of emotion. The features are cast in a classic or noble mould, and must accordingly be contemplated with pleasure; but the countenance which, critically speaking, is perhaps full of faults, and yet has that charm of expression which we call lovely, haunts the memory and melts the heart. Handsome women are excellent for the wives of ambassadors; they seem born to be ladies, to dress elegantly, and minister at the altar of fashion; but lovely women—they are the true poetry of life; their naïveté cheers, their smiles exhilarate, their tenderness blesses. They are

> "ta'en from the common clay,
> Moulded by God and tempered by the tears
> Of angels."*

As they move around us, the very atmosphere grows heavenly; as they sit beside us, the pulse of care is laid asleep; their confidence elates the soul more than royal favor, and their love is life's dearest boon.

Society is too often at war with love. Thousands of human spirits created to assimilate, to afford mutual comfort and inspiration, to interpret each other, and find in sympathy a balm and motive that will render them superior to vicissitude; thousands of human spirits cross and recross each other's paths, severed by the barriers of vain custom and arbitrary opinion.

* Tennyson.

"We are light sparkles floating in the atmosphere of Deity," says a powerful writer; yes, we are so, but swept about for ever by the capricious winds of social habits and theories. We hear noble and devoted feeling continually eulogized; but why cultivate it at the expense of so much uncompromising zeal, such abrogation of self, and loyalty to principle, if the baser tenets of inferior natures are to rule its exercise? It is moral cowardice to obey the letter of the law and know not its spirit; the soul has inalienable rights, and the first of these is love. It is controllable by reason, allied to what is highest within us, and therefore legitimately entitled to reign. "So soon as this want or power," says Shelley, "is dead, man becomes the living sepulchre of himself, and what yet survives is the mere husk of what he once was."

Narrow moralists err in confounding action and emotion. Shall any blind adherence to hollow routine prevent an intelligent, free being from acknowledging to itself what "God hath joined together?" Is there not a bridal over which silence presides, holier than any which priestly words sanction? Perchance if the veil were lifted from all human hearts, at this moment, it would be seen that the purest, deepest, most real love on earth is unrecognised, unacknowledged, and only vaguely recorded in the page of genius or the unwritten day-dream. "The unconscious," says Carlyle, "is the alone complete." Many a being is sustained by a sentiment never even self-confessed. There is a glorious conservative principle in our nature. The true heart is mighty. This is a fact which confirms the doctrine of immortality. The intense individuality, the clear and absolute claim of love, no social agency can overcome. The principle must be divine, thus to survive. Though "lips of motionless ice reply to lips glowing with the heart's

best food;" though the conventionalities of love are for ever bringing into disrepute the sentiment; though every obstacle is assiduously erected against that candid and habitual intercourse which would lead to such blessed realities, let the votary of truth hopefully grope his way amid the repulsive artificialities of the world, towards the high temple of the divinity!

But the chief obstacle to love is moral, not external. It lies in weakness or insincerity. It expires because divorced from character.

> "How fine and noble a thing is confidence,
> How reasonable too and almost godlike!
> Fast cement of fast friends, bond of society,
> Old natural go-between in the world's business,
> Where civil life and order, wanting this cement,
> Would presently rush back
> Into the pristine state of singularity,
> And each man stand alone."*

Of life's countless incongruities that startle with bitter truth the blest dreams of the heart, the saddest is the union "fraught with woe" of loveliness and levity. To see the young cut off in their spring, a majestic tree withered in a parasite's embrace, the golden harvest prostrate and mildewed by storms, suggests thoughts not wholly despairing. But a human creature richly endowed with every grace, radiant in beauty, fascinating to behold, whose every aspect and utterance is winsome, with no strength of affection, no permanency of feeling, not a forlorn spark of the enthusiasm her charms inspire—is life's crowning mockery. It is light without heat, blossom without fruit, an enticing shadow, an unreal essence, a magnificent delusion. To

* Lamb's John Woodville.

those who yield to its allurements, it is given to know the fate of Tantalus, aggravated in the degree that moral surpasses physical suffering. We talk of life and death, of the conflict of the elements, of verdure and sterility, of light and shade, as wonderful antagonism; but from these opposites arise harmonious results, and there is some principle more or less clear obviously at work in their mutual action. But the soul, by an instinct stronger than reason, ever associates beauty with truth. Where expression, in its sweetest and most attractive shape, beams from form and feature, almost irresistible is the impulse there to yield faith; and there is no re-action of the heart more dark and chill than the deliberate conviction that the inimitable altar at which we worshipped, is a whited sepulchre.

"Oh, Evadne!
Would there were any safety in thy sex!"

Do we wonder, then, that the heathens only deified nature and the dead? How calm and enduring then seems the beauty of the outward world in comparison with the illusive and incomplete loveliness of humanity! How soon do the waves of mortal love, in their restless heavings, cast us in meek supplication at the feet of the Eternal! Not a spear of grass but seems more blest in the lowly completeness of its destiny; not a fleecy cloud sails across the blue sky, but appears chartered with a tranquil assurance denied to the soul.

"If this, indeed, were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless days,
The long mechanic pacings to and fro,
The set grey life and apathetic end."

But this is *not* all. High feeling is not identical with what

is called youthful romance. Indeed the instances are rare, and the characters remarkable, where it asserts itself in very early life. One of the most philosophic men I ever knew, who not only professed, but lived out a settled theory of human nature, maintained that suffering was essential to the capacity of true love. He believed the elements of the soul were deepened and made conscious only through painful experience. At a mature age he sought the presence of one who had known severe affliction, and possessed native strength of mind and feeling adequate to improve it. Nor was he disappointed. So much a part of his being did she become, that from the hour of her death his pulse intermitted. There is a latent morality involved in all genuine experience, which reflection at length discovers. Hence the calm priest of Rydal Mount declares that

> "Love was given,
> Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly to this end,—
> *That self might be annulled.*"

To all there come better moments, seasons when the hidden flowers of character expand. Those with whom we hold general intercourse, elicit but parts of our natures. Kindred and the friends of our childhood are blinded by familiarity; they are too near the moral landscape to see the perspective; some early, perhaps casual trait, some fixed, local, or personal association, a certain habitual outward sympathy, often utterly prevents them from comprehending or appreciating us:

> "The youth, because
> He had been always with her in the house,
> Thought not of Dora."

Will God suffer us, if true and patient, to pass thus masked through the world? Shall the deep resources, the most

individual affinities within us, lie for ever unknown? Will no eye be love-quickened to discern, no ear made acute to hear what is highest and most real? Shall not the mute chord be struck at last by a hand skilled to call out its profoundest melody? Will not the restless spirit become for awhile domesticated in this beautiful world, and surrender itself trustfully to existence? One of the unregarded proofs of the divinity in the heart is the process wrought by a manly soul, to which the serious aspect of life has been revealed, upon the more flexible and less comprehensive spirit of an attached woman. Then, indeed, she recognises "God in him." Development is the grand condition to which our natures tend; and love, in its best sense, the most efficient agency therein. It is a blessed ordination which renders woman so much more alive to the present, so impressible, so inclined and fitted to draw materials of thought and enjoyment from what is adjacent and incidental. The sterner sex, in their larger interests and more far-reaching speculations, forget that "a man's best things lie nearest him;" and fail to apply the great precept that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Happy is it that gentle voices make him aware of the flower at his feet, and the breeze that plays round his brow, of the humble yet constant ministries he is so apt to neglect, and the thousand minor sources of truth and happiness that every hour brings forth, and thrice happy for her, that when "thoughts too deep for tears" awe her quick perceptions, when solemn realities brood oppressively upon her lightsome heart, there is an interpreter at hand to guide and to encourage. The richest vine may trail upon the ground and be lost to view amid the grass, if there be no oak near it to lift it gracefully into the sunshine. Thus character acts, mind meets mind, soul responds

to soul, lofty and tender sympathies co-operate, and we realize why the "natural tears" of Eve were so quickly dried, when she departed from Paradise. Dante makes hell itself sacred by admitting mutual love to dwell amid its terrors. Then we sleep again the sleep of childhood, and the light of dawn is like a new birth. We walk beneath the sky as if allied to its infinity; and the invisible touch of the breeze affects us like the gratulation of nature; we recognise a divine principle in the issues of being, and become conscious of the golden link between terrestrial life and immortality. It is wonderful to trace the gradual effect of intimate and true communion. We smile incredulously at the anecdotes of the magnetizer. There is a more subtle change, a more spiritual infusion, of which love is the channel. It sometimes scarcely appears extravagant to say that lovers create the souls to which they are bound. Every true woman sees "Othello's visage in his mind." We in a manner become what we love. Wisdom and refinement, strength to endure, and vision to behold—new and glorious endowments full of beauty and promise, are the legitimate offspring of enlightened and deep affection.

"There is a love! 'tis not the wandering fire
That must be fed on folly, or expire;
Gleam of polluted hearts, the meteor ray
That fades as rises Reason's nobler day;
But passion made essential, holy, bright,
Like the raised dead, our dust transformed to light.
'Tis not the cold Romancer's ecstasy,
The flame new-lit at every passing eye;
But the high impulse that the stately soul
Feels slow engross it, but engross it whole;
Yet seeks it not, nay turns with stern disdain

On its own weakness that *can* wear a chain ;
Still wrestling with the angel, till its pride
Feels all the strength departed from its side."*

* Croly.

THE END.

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